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ABSTRACT

This book traces the process by which the British government's formal commitment to increasing access to higher education and expanding continuing education has gone hand in hand with severe cuts in extramural departments, insistence on self-financing, and emphasis on vocational training for regeneration, at the expense of liberal education for personal development and citizenship. Chapter 1 is an outline of the history of university adult education (UAE). The next two chapters detail developments in UAE over the last 20 years and attempt to relate change in UAE to education in the wider university and to the growth of political pressure. The argument is made that UAE is in crisis. Chapter 4 considers recently expressed views on the future of UAE, critiques the rationale of the drive to vocational and professional continuing education, and considers the organization of UAE in the context of the changes of the last two decades. Chapter 5 examines the nature of the university today, scrutinizes recent developments in the patterns of UAE provision, suggests changes to facilitate a serious move by universities into a broader continuing education, and discusses proposals from the political parties and a 1987 White Paper. Twenty-one pages of notes and references, a bibliography of approximately 350 items and an author index are provided. (YLB)

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UNIVERSITY ADULT EDUCATION IN CRISIS

John McIlroy and Bruce Spencer

With a Foreword by Richard Hoggart

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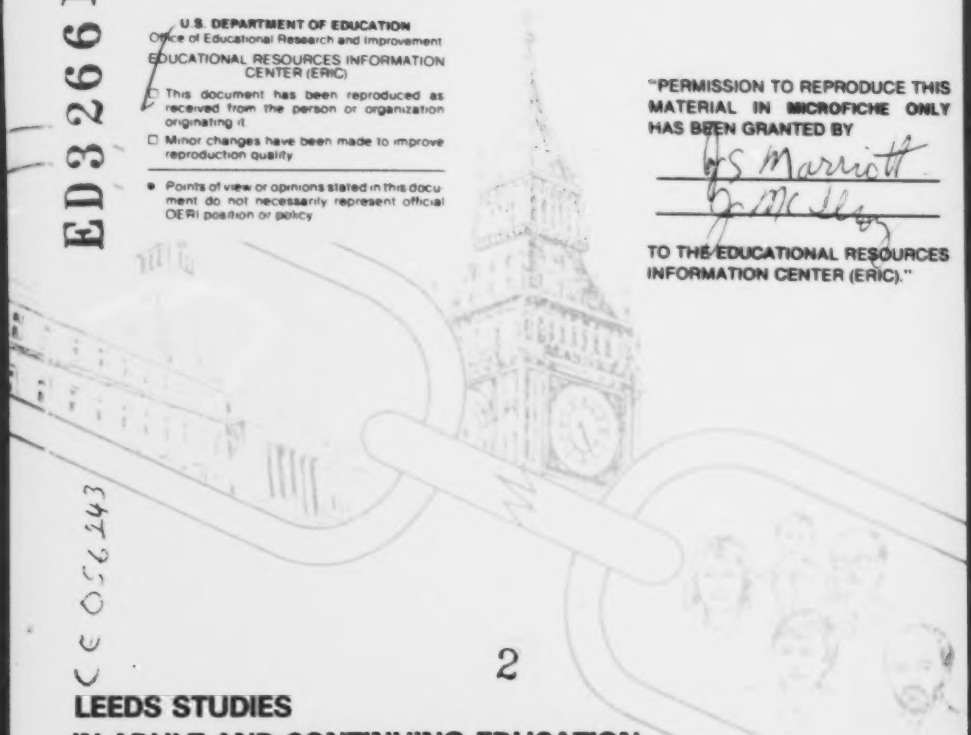

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LEEDS STUDIES IN ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

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University Adult Education in Crisis

John McIlroy and Bruce Spencer

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IN ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

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Contents

Foreword *by Richard Hoggart*		page iii
Preface		vi
1	The Great Tradition?	1
2	University Adult Education in the 1970s — Prelude to Crisis	24
3	The Years of Crisis	50
4	Issues and Arguments	86
5	The Future of University Adult Education	127
Notes and references		166

Foreword

After reading this book one sees more clearly how lucky were those of us who entered university extramural departments soon after the war: we had the final ten to fifteen years when the Great Tradition in that work still had its force. We revered Tawney and the high calling he indicated for us and our students; those of us who started in Yorkshire and took WEA Tutorial Classes were reminded constantly of the demands George Thompson had made of his tutors, and met a gentler but still highly-principled version in his successor Fred Sedgwick; and from Leeds in those first years there came Raybould's severe and uncompromising insistence on the Mansbridge/ Tawney educational principles for work with adults.

Over the last quarter of a century and particularly in the last decade much in those ideals has been set aside, argued (badly) out of existence and made to seem old-fashioned and irrelevant. The process has two main origins, one short the other long term. The short term influence is that concentration on education as a vocational affair above all (when adult education is being considered, this is often coupled with a suspicion that extramural classes which have larger aims are almost certain to be left-wing). The longer secular impulse is that movement in the whole of the developed world towards a relativism which deeply suspects any practice based on idealism of whatever kind.

In such a situation and even before the hard-nosed educational pragmatism of the last decade neither the universities nor their extramural departments were, most of them, in a condition to reassert the non-vocational case for work with adults outside the university. When the very considerable expansion of the 1960s got under way few universities saw it as the opportunity to reconsider subjects, syllabuses or — even more — the nature of the student body. More tended to mean more of the same in all those three areas; and a huge opportunity was lost.

The extramural departments themselves made their case too feebly. Fearing rhetoric and uncertain of their hold on their own tradition they by and large let their true case go by default. When later and harder times came they again put up a poor resistance to the overweening demands for proved cost-effectiveness and for a vocational slant at the expense of those kinds of study which were undertaken for the love of God and for the development of the personality. To get onto the vocational train seemed a safer choice.

Today books about university extramural education, which still come frequently from the presses, are of two main kinds. The first have accepted the prevailing economic determinism and self-justification and see university extramural studies as overwhelmingly a support to the economy. Their prose eerily mirrors their attitudes. The other wing is chiefly made up of books which do seek to assert some larger and deeper purposes for university and other adult education. But they have difficulty in finding the right language and have often been driven into a corner because of their nervousness about sounding like 'high-principled do-gooding members of the bourgeoisie'. So they tend to deploy a shrill and two-dimensional set of assertions about the prime role of adult education as a way of liberating the working classes from the bondage of capitalism's culture. They sound much less mature, much less sure of the nature of the educational process, than their ancestors who attacked the WEA on somewhat similar grounds; and they show hardly any sense of having understood what Tawney was saying. Their 'ideals' are often a shallow ideology.

Against such a background this book comes as a tonic and corrective. To begin with, it offers a thorough and fair-minded account of that decline over the past forty years which I have done no more than point to above. More important, it gives a thoughtful and often subtle evaluation of the educational and philosophical issues which lie behind all the arguments.

To take only some examples. It does not set one approach against the other; so it recognises the value of vocational studies in adult education; it doesn't want them to be asserted as overriding, as against 'out of date' ideals and purposes. It recognises well the value of the original high aims within university adult education and sees how those aims can be trivialised and debased by activist agit-prop. It even recognises, and this is most unusual, the valuable work being done by many teachers with 16–18 year olds in local authority Further Education; and recognises too that most university extramural departments have neglected the opportunities for valuable links with that work.

Most important of all, it knows about the need for standards and challenges in university extramural work of all kinds. It rightly points here, as to a sign of educational lack of stomach and weakness of will, to the decline of the three-year Tutorial Class and the justifications usually offered for that decline ('a bourgeois concept', 'too demanding of people

who have been working all day'). Hearing that, if you are one who has conducted tutorial classes year after year, with all they demand from both the students and the tutors, you feel like someone hearing a lazy non-swimmer insisting that swimming has no value 'nowadays' and perhaps never had.

At the end the authors bravely set out at length what in their view needs to be done to amend matters. It is interesting stuff though, as they will know, not particularly new. ACACE tried to lay out much of that. So did some of us in the 1950s when the first big clouds appeared. It is none the less well worth saying and in new words and ways. But will anyone listen? The whole thrust of the present government is against such thoughts. Yet you never know . . . someone in there might be willing to bend an ear. Labour and the Alliance have made the right noises and should therefore take this book to their hearts and minds. Vice-Chancellors should take time off from the endless struggle with resources and with the undeniable need to protect their best internal departments as well as they can, so as to renew their sense of a need outside the walls which has never gone away and which has in some sense represented the best in university ideals. Heads of extramural departments should read and mark it most carefully, take heart from it and decide to fight with more brio.

RICHARD HOGGART

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Preface

This book was completed early in 1987. Unfortunately, major events since that time do little to change its analysis or its conclusions. The translation of the White Paper, *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge* into the clauses dealing with higher education in Kenneth Baker's Great Educational Reform Bill, and the December 1987 government decision to transfer the funding of university liberal adult education from the Department of Education and Science to the new Universities Funding Council, confirm the picture painted in the following pages. They represent a logical culmination of the thrust of policy-making since 1979.

The dangers inherent in the new conservative settlement for university adult and continuing education are obvious ones. The developing pattern of change in the universities will be accelerated and augmented. A UFC with a strong business orientation and explicitly subordinate to ministerial directive is likely to channel funds to the kind of education blessed by government. The new custom-made mechanism for this is likely to be some variant of the contract system outlined in the White Paper. Whilst the Bill is silent on the details, it does give the new Funding Councils 'power to make payments subject to such terms and conditions as they think fit'. Finance will be disbursed with strings attached and this will provide scope for the DES and UFC to assess performance according to pre-set targets. Universities and university departments judged inadequate on the new criteria of efficiency will encounter problems in the following set of contract negotiations.

The Bill's clauses weakening the employment protection of university teachers carry the potential for a new flexibility of labour. Those who will not conform and are intractable, judged by the new standards of performance, will vanish with funding. The university will move more towards the economists' 'flexible firm' model with a 'core' of permanent protected workers moving between jobs and a 'periphery' of dispensable part-time and short-contract employees, hired and fired in direct relation to changes in the external market place. A consequent convincing scenario sees universities gradually, but remorselessly, robbed of their autonomy. They incrementally mirror the requirements of the state, their staff become more pliant and conformist, their teaching and research becomes increasingly orthodox and conventional, reflecting the concerns and demands of government, civil servants and employers.

These dangers all apply sharply to adult and continuing education. It is part of the university but closer to the market place. It already represents many of these processes in microcosm. It is increasingly self financing and entrepreneurial and many extramural departments are already personifying the 'flexible firm' in miniature. Until now, university adult and continuing education has been shielded — albeit in limited fashion — by direct state funding. The danger inherent in the termination of institutional earmarking for liberal adult education, with the DES grant to extramural departments now passing through the coffers of the UFC, requires little emphasis. This decision opens up the possibility that the money now used to subsidise university liberal adult education will be transferred to other purposes, most probably to vocational training. This threat has always been there. Today's combination of a state sponsored, industrialised UFC, thirsting for government approval and a financially anorexic university hierarchy hungering for new resources give it greater point. If funds are diverted away from liberal education either by the UFC or by the universities themselves, the harmful tendencies traced in detail in this book will climax.

This contemporary challenge is also an opportunity for university adult educators. The switch in funding could conversely strengthen the beleaguered liberal education and root it more firmly within the university — if university leaders are prepared to reinforce the rhetorical respect they pay to this provision with a fair share of resources. The UFC will not be in place until 1989 and the working party, with representation from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, the UGC and DES will wish to scrutinise the general position in order to plan the details of transition.

Here is an opportunity, perhaps a final opportunity, to reargue the need for a balanced, integrated continuing education in which liberal adult education for those previously excluded from the opportunities of a university education takes its place beside increased access for adults and educationally underprivileged groups to existing degree programmes, the development of new degree courses tailor-made for these groups and professional and vocational education and training. Such an assertion must concern itself with the detailed specifics of organisation and funding. But it will achieve little unless it is set in a vigorous and imaginative affirmation of the distinctive purpose of university continuing education. There is an urgent necessity to re-emphasise the nature of university

continuing education as an education that is critical and liberating, that deals with ends as well as means, broad issues as well as immediate problems, the ordering of society as well as the mechanics of work roles and that aims to produce the thinking, questioning citizen, rather than the efficient, conventional technician. We hope that this book will make a small contribution to this process.

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1

The Great Tradition?

> It may be very good for the commercial prosperity of the nation that our workmen should be higher skilled and more capable than their brethren in America or Germany but when education has merely made a man into a better workman it has not done all that it can for him nor all that he has a right to expect.
>
> *Oxford and Working Class Education*, 1908

> There is, perhaps, no branch of our vast educational system which should more attract within its particular sphere the aid and encouragement of the state than adult education. How many must there be in Britain, after the disturbance of two destructive wars, who thirst in later life to learn about the humanities, the history of their country, the philosophies of the human race and the arts and letters which sustain and are borne forward by the ever conquering English language? This ranks, in my opinion, far above science and technical instruction which are well sustained and not without their rewards in our present system. The mental and moral outlook of free men studying the past with free minds in order to discern the future demands the highest measures which our hard pressed finances can sustain. I have no doubt myself that a man or woman earnestly seeking in grown up life to be guided to wide and suggestive knowledge in its largest and most uplifted sphere will make the best of all the pupils in this age of clatter and buzz, of gape and gloat.
>
> Winston Churchill, *Letter to the TUC*, 1953

Introduction

The university adult education of the past often seemed a straightforward affair. Unlike many other countries, we believed that it was both possible and desirable for our universities to make their teaching and the fruits of their research available to more than the small elite of full-time students. This, it was agreed, required some system of pedagogic and organisational adaptation. The majority of universities in England and Wales organised a group of lecturers specialising in different subject disciplines in a department of adult education or extramural studies. Whilst a variety of courses were mounted in business schools and departments of engineering, medicine or architecture, the extramural department was viewed as the university's main contribution to the education of adults.

The extramural tutors were selected for their academic excellence and, to one degree or another, for their established or potential proficiency in the education of adults — a field which was seen as a specialist area requiring specialist techniques. This was related to a perceived if limited obligation to working-class students who might often be expected to lack

12

an initial university education. There was, moreover, a desire to relate university scholarship to the valuable life experience and to the practical concerns of those who attended courses. University adult education was seen as having a strong social purpose imprint. It attempted to contribute to an informed democracy, to help students make sense of their lives and of the society in which they lived, so that action for change would be informed and progressive. The programme, therefore, emphasised a liberal education in contradistinction to vocational or examined courses. Nonetheless, job-related and certificated programmes were available.

Extramural tutors taught a certain number of classes. They also organised a programme consisting of courses open to all, as well as provision for special interest groups, drawing on internal university teachers and other specialists willing to serve as part-time tutors. Democratic ideals were embodied in the right of students to choose subjects and tutors. Hence, a large part of the programme was provided in collaboration with a voluntary self-governing organisation — the Workers' Educational Association. The system was underpinned by a direct grant from the Department of Education and Science, which in recognition of the universities' sense of social responsibility, contributed seventy-five per cent of full- and part-time tutor costs, the residue of finance being provided by the university itself.

Like all snapshots, this account is deceptively simplistic. But, more importantly, the established order it denoted is now in the throes of complex revolutionary change. In many universities there are wide-ranging discussions about the future role of liberal adult education. The existing system of state funding of university adult education is widely questioned. New creatures from faraway places with strange-sounding names like PEVE, PICKUP and CET, have taken the stage. The CER and the USR are increasingly consulted and invoked. Documents on the future of university adult education come complete with Jargon Directory.[1] The old extramural departments are being transformed, their staffing levels reduced and their very *raison d'être* vigorously interrogated. Ambitious new scenarios for the expansion of continuing education by the universities are plotted and argued about.

Our aim in this essay is to try to make some sense of this upheaval. Succeeding chapters will examine what is happening today in some detail by discussing and analysing developments in university adult education since 1970. It would, however, be one-sided to suggest that the present

turmoil is simply the product of the economic and political trends of the 1970s or 1980s. Like most of today's problems it is rooted in the past. We want, therefore, first of all to outline briefly a little of the historical background of university adult education. This will show that our brief initial sketch is extremely limited and skates over numerous problems and arguments. A brief history appears particularly necessary as we are hopefully addressing to a lesser degree than in the past a closed and initiated audience. The discussion in universities on future philosophy and structures for adult and continuing education has led to a greater interest by university teachers and other educators. Understandably, they are often not familiar with what has gone before and shaped the issues we are confronted with today.

University adult education: a nutshell history

The roots of the modern university's contribution to the education of adults lie in the *university extension* movement of the last century.[2] Initially, in the 1840s, this term denoted the extension of opportunities for full-time university study from the landed aristocracy to the newly rising industrial middle classes as part of an attempt to refurbish Oxford and Cambridge. The reform of the ancient universities and the establishment of the redbrick institutions was accompanied by small shoots of the kind of adult education familiar to us today. For example, from its inception in 1851, evening classes were a feature of the activities of Owens College — the forerunner of Manchester University. But the real development of University Extension, in the sense of the university catering for those who were not and perhaps were never likely to be full-time students, was launched from Cambridge in 1873.[3] In the late sixties, James Stuart, a fellow of Trinity College, had lectured all over the country to groups of women school-teachers, railway workers and co-operators. By 1875 lectures were being held in a hundred centres nationally and a Syndicate for Local Lectures was established.

London followed and the Victoria University in Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester was soon involved. Oxford established a Committee for Extension Lectures in 1878. By that time, around 60,000 students were attending lectures on history, political economy, literature, art, philosophy and natural science. In many centres the practice developed

14

of following the lecture with a discussion. Class examinations were available but the opportunity was taken up by only a small minority.

The influences driving this movement were mixed ones. There was an impetus to realise democratic rights, to provide learning for excluded sections of the population and a certain *narodnik* desire to go to the workers with the spiritual uplift of an education that would bind all classes closer together. Some saw extension lectures as 'the best safeguard of the country from revolutionary wild socialism'.[4] Many of the movement's supporters were in the mould of social liberalism that was to reach its climax in the early years of the twentieth century.

University Extension remained a largely middle-class matter. Finance was a problem — the majority of lectures had to be self-supporting — and attendance was simply beyond the pocket of the majority of the population. University Extension did give a fillip to the education of women. In certain areas — the mines of Durham and Northumberland and parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire — it did involve working-class students. But national events, particularly the trade union and political upheavals of the 1890s, worked against this. There were differences amongst the organisers as to whether the objective was to create more 'pure' students pursuing an ordinary university education; or, alternatively, to make university education an intrinsic part of the life experience of those who would continue to go about their normal business. As in Nottingham, the evolution of an extension centre into a university college sometimes meant the relative exclusion of both workers and women: the resultant 'pure' students were on the whole middle-class males.

The University Extension Movement failed to bring all social classes together in any significant growth of university education. It was based upon 'a totally inadequate realisation of the extent and depth of the sense of alienation among the working class'.[5] The system of organisational and pedagogical adaptation represented by the formation of the Workers' Educational Association in 1903 and its intimate alliance with Oxford University, was in all aspects a far more efficient instrument for university extension.[6] It was built on the basis of the lessons learned and the links made in the earlier movement. Its object was more specific: the working class activist. If the workers' world was to be permeated with university culture and values, then there was a need for more adaptation by the university and a better thought-out and specialised approach than the earlier movement had represented. If the chasm between labour and the

academy was to be bridged, worker students had to be directly involved in the organisation of their education. And support had to be sought from such bodies as the unions, the co-operative societies and the Labour Party, with which they identified. The governing body of the Association consisted of representatives of both the working-class organisations and the universities.

There were soon more than fifty branches of the WEA. Each gave their members the right, in the words of the WEA's founder, Albert Mansbridge, 'to decide how, why, what or when they wish to study'.[7] The branches promoted courses organised through joint committees of WEA and university representatives — a system which soon spread from Oxford to other universities. The focal point was no longer the old-style extension lecture but the new tutorial class. The tutorials were based on sustained study, with rigorous requirements as to reading and writing, over two or three years. Their emphasis on relatively small groups of students and on discussion sprang from a recognition of the inadequacy of the mass lecture system in penetrating the educational inexperience of the majority of students. Past financial difficulties were overcome by the payment from 1908 of a direct State grant for these classes.

The charter of the new movement, the 1908 Report: *Oxford and Working Class Education*, directly related educational changes to the political and social ferment, the development of working class industrial militancy and political self-organisation that characterised the period. It was informed by philanthropy, by a desire to extend the influence of the universities and renew their composition and by a mission to control and form the rising working-class movement.[8] The Report's far-sighted authors felt it imperative that working-class leaders 'should obtain the knowledge necessary to enable them to show foresight in their choice of political means'.[9] The future Labour MP or trade union secretary needed an Oxford education just as much as the civil servant or barrister. Moreover, 'the education which Oxford can give by broadening his knowledge and strengthening his judgement would make him at once a more efficient servant of his own society and a more potent influence on the side of industrial peace'.[10] The initiation of change was in the university's self-interest as well as in the national interest, for 'it would involve a grave loss both to Oxford and to English political life were the close association that has existed between the university and the world of affairs to be broken or impaired on the accession of new classes to power'.[11]

This approach was bound to cause problems for those who saw working-class education not as an instrument for integrating the leadership and gifted individuals into the establishment but as a means of ridding society of that establishment. The growing popularity of the view that working-class education must be organisationally and philosophically independent of state and university led to the Ruskin College Strike, to the formation of the Marxist Central Labour College and, eventually, the National Council of Labour Colleges. The division in working-class education endured for half a century.[12]

But there were also tensions within the universities and the WEA. All were agreed that what was required was a liberal as distinct from a vocational or technical education. There was little dissension from the view that emphasis should be laid on the social sciences and the humanities, that what was essential was 'serious teaching of the best and most thorough kind on matters standing in an intelligible relation to the life interests of the workmen'.[13] But the majority in the universities saw the objective and impartial approach of liberalism, its rounded analysis of all points of view, as developing similar attitudes within its students. Mansbridge appeared to see education as an end in itself 'to develop the mind and body in the power of the spirit', and did not dissent from the idea of an objective university education.[14]

Others, such as Tawney, Wooton and Cole who criticised the 'cant of impartiality', placed greater emphasis on social purpose, social reform, education as a prelude to action. Cole observed 'We have seen too many branches wrecked by the well meaning educationalist who is so keen on fostering what he calls "the student mind" that he has no desire or no power to attract the militant trade unionist who wants to turn his education to definite and practical purpose. Personally, I have seen too much of "the student mind" to have any love for it or to want it to dominate our Movement. I want to serve the live wired practical worker who wants guidance in facing the practical problems of living.'[15]

This remained a minority strand in university adult education (UAE). But it found resonance with many WEA activists, such as George Thompson, the Yorkshire District Secretary who saw the WEA as the educational expression of labourism and a weapon in the class struggle.[16] The social purpose component received sustenance through the formulation in 1919 of a more direct organisational alliance with the labour movement represented in the foundation of the Workers' Educational

Trade Union Committee to provide specific courses for individual trade unions.[17]

The Oxford Report had seen the major purpose of the liaison with the WEA as the attraction of more working-class students into full-time study. It had not felt the need for any specific organisation to resource the work inside the university beyond what had sufficed for university extension. But it was now the part-time evening tutorials that were flourishing. By 1918, there were around 150 such classes involving over 4,000 students. The universities were heartened by the ability of the students to meet their standards. But in the face of further possible growth there was an increased awareness of a need for a greater specialised adaptation of the internal university approach. Scholarship it was felt must relate even more closely to the life experience of the students. Expansion might be better resourced by a special agency inside the university. Concern at the spread of Marxist education during the war years also provided a stimulus for further examination of adult education as a prelude to expansion.[18]

The 1919 Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction saw the universities' activities, as had its 1908 predecessor, as aimed particularly at the working class.[19] Whilst it again stressed UAE as an instrument of social integration, it emphasised to a far greater degree egalitarianism and social reform. It was cogent and firm on the necessity for the state to finance social purpose education even if provision was committed or partisan. The Report mounted a frontal attack on the idea that adult education should constitute simply an annexe to a university's main activities. It should be treated not as an appendage but rather as an essential part of such activities. The Report stated that 'the provision of a liberal education for adult students should be regarded by universities as a normal and necessary part of their functions',[20] a view vice-chancellors still feel the need to urge seven decades later.

To this end, 'there should be established at each university a department of extra-mural education with an academic head'.[21] The universities' existing attitude, the Report felt, created a serious disequilibrium in the resources devoted to internal as distinct from extra-mural activities. There was an awareness of adult education as a specialist activity: '. . . [the worker] begins the study of economics — not with the abstract definition of value and exchange but from the insistent facts of

his own wages, his own cost of living, and the aims of his own trade union.'[22]

And the proposals for change were set within a framework of *university reform*: the enhanced importance of adult education should touch the mainsprings of existing research, teaching and organisation. Adult education was 'a permanent national necessity, an inseparable aspect of citizenship and therefore should be both universal and lifelong'.[23] If this national need was to be met the universities needed to change themselves. Extramural departments could act as a catalyst in transforming the parent body. The departments would not merely be the eyes and ears of the universities, external emissaries planting new university centres in the surrounding towns; they would also act as proselytisers within the walls influencing university policy so that 'the unsatisfactory position of adult education would be altered'.[24] Adult education was no longer seen mainly as a means to bring more workers into the university to pursue degree courses. It was a system *sui generis* with its own rationale.

What the 1919 Report was urging was a very tall order. Providing the effective preconditions for members of the working class to undertake higher education on a wide scale was a difficult task, in both ideological and material terms, in the early years of the century. It was to become more difficult with social change. There was a multiplicity of problems, pedagogic and social, ranging from the unwillingness of the State to provide resources, to the prejudices against education which many workers drew from their initial schooling. The siting of provision in the universities provided advantages in terms of access to scholarly research and academic excellence. But there was always a danger that such resiliently conservative institutions as the universities would ensure that UAE remained an annexe, if a somewhat extended one, would indulge in lipservice and utilise adult education for their own purposes, foreign to the idealism and zeal of its architects. For example, arguments about balance and service to the local community could ensure duplication of the patterns of internal provision, so that the already educated as well as the educationally underprivileged were strongly represented. The grave imbalance of universities in both social and educational terms would then remain uncorrected.

From the start, this imbalance created tensions between internal and external work. There was a danger that part-time students would be seen as less important than undergraduates, that extramural work would be

perceived as less prestigious than degree work — not quite the full shilling. To adapt the pedagogy of internal teaching for students with an impoverished initial education required a great deal of commitment, time and trouble — even a sense of mission. It required organisational prescription and planning not easily quantified in terms of the duties and standards expected of a university lecturer. If the education of educationally deprived adults was to be successful it would require, at least to a certain degree, a break with the patterns and rhythms of internal teaching. Yet the extramural department and its staff were part of the university and felt pressures to conform.

The inbuilt elitism of universities which took in tiny numbers of extremely able students from the upper classes and concentrated on their education, in harness with the development of high-level knowledge through research, meant that UAE was embedded in an essentially hostile institution generalising bourgeois cultural assumptions. The ideology of the universities, as many commentators have pointed out, was simultaneously liberal, in the sense of dedication to the critical open-ended pursuit of truth; and elitist, in the sense of its restricted social base and its relegation of forms of knowledge which might serve more practical ends to other lesser institutions. The smart money, even in 1919, would have bet that more than the social forces available to the Tawneys and the Coles would be required if UAE was to exploit the contradictions between Oxford as the bastion of liberal education *and* class privilege. The likelihood was always that UAE would drift towards the already educated, mounting provision more acceptable, less troublesome and more intelligible from the viewpoint of the university registry and that the language of social purpose would increasingly serve as evasive and self-justifying rhetoric.

This danger was related to a contradiction at the heart of liberalism in adult education, a contradiction which caused suspicion of adult education amongst many in the university. It was possible to perceive the liberal method as a broadening out of knowledge, its encouragement of discussion and criticism of a wide range of ideas as civilising worker students, making them see the other side of the case, weaning them away from extremist viewpoints, turning them into responsible citizens of a broadly acceptable *status quo*. It was, however, also possible to perceive the critical probing method of liberal education as providing the preconditions for a stronger, more intelligently based, more articulate

and, therefore, more *dangerous* commitment to radical social action and to disturbing social change. These opposed views have done battle throughout the history of UAE, although the parent university and ultimately the system of direct state finance acted as powerful controls against an education likely to become too committed or subversive of the established order.[25] However, this did not mean that in many cases — we have already mentioned Yorkshire — students could not utilise the educational democracy to meet *their* goals. One authority writes of the inter-war years 'We may generalise by saying that the WEA classes bore the character of their locality and that in areas where Marxism was strong the gulf between the labour colleges and the WEA was not great.'[26]

Immediately after the 1919 Report came a period of recession and cutbacks in state expenditure. However, the example of Nottingham in 1920 was widely followed and by the late thirties, only Leeds, Sheffield and Reading had failed to establish extramural departments or at least a director of extramural studies. There had been staff tutors earlier, but they had often been appointed to internal departments with responsibility for specified tutorial classes. By the mid-1920s, there were more than twenty extramural tutors and a decade later more than eighty. Between the wars UAE remained closely aligned with the WEA, maintained social purpose as an important component of its approach and made a significant contribution to the education of the labour movement.

By 1939, there were more than 800 tutorial classes with nearly 15,000 students. But many universities, such as Nottingham, maintained a smaller group of direct extension courses of a shorter, more elementary, kind, and argued a responsibility not just to the working class but to all sections of their local community. This was often related to the use by universities of their adult education bodies as a means of developing their influence in their hinterland in order to extend their *existing* concerns and student bodies, not to transform them. Empire building of this kind was often accompanied by conflict with those who sought to give UAE a more working-class and emancipatory orientation.[27] The limited impact of the new departments within the university can be seen from the failure to implement certain recommendations of the 1919 Report. Nothing at all seems to have been done, for example, about the proposal that universities should take into account candidates' suitability for extramural work when appointing to internal posts.

21.

Gradually, UAE was changed by the universities, not vice versa. It is important to understand that this sprang from contradictions inherent in the system, so as to guard against the idea of a sudden fall-away from the working class and social purpose in the post-war period. It was, for example, in the development of short courses by the universities in the 1930s that G.D.H. Cole saw competition between the extramural departments and the WEA beginning to blossom. He claimed that it was then that 'the long running fight about where working class education stopped and other kinds of adult education began set in'.[28] These tendencies were small-scale before 1939: they accelerated after the post-war period.

The modern system was really the child of the 1940s and 50s. It was then that the modern extramural department emerged on a sizeable basis, with full formal parity with internal departments. Before the war, extramural staff were often a group apart: 'They might be personally acquainted with other members of the university but often were not. They had no rooms in the university. The titles of their posts were not those employed for other academic appointments. Their salary scale did not correspond with any existing for intra-mural staff. No provision existed for them to be promoted to posts of higher status and salary'.[29]

By the early 1950s, every university with the exception of Reading had an extramural department and there were more than 250 staff tutors. Extramural directors were explicitly asserting in some detail that they should provide for 'the special needs of those engaged in the professions or in industry'[30] and that they 'could not regard their services as available exclusively to any one organisation or section of the community'.[31] The growth of post-14 schooling, the further education sector and the universities themselves militated against social purpose UAE aimed at working-class groups. So did the recomposition of the working class; the burgeoning of the welfare state; the new affluence; changes in working class culture and community; and the growth of a new privatisation and instrumentalism, crudely symbolised by private car ownership, television and washing machines. UAE increasingly took on the stamp, not of the working class, social change and university reform but of the parent body and its existing functions, and the demand of the already educated for refresher and leisure courses.

The 1950s and 60s saw a turn away from education for social change, working-class students and intimate and extensive collaboration with the

WEA. Departments now competed with the WEA across the whole range of provision. Certain extramural directors found the old alliance an embarrassment and saw the Association as a relic of a best buried past. The appointment of subject-specialists with little interest in pioneering work or working-class education at once reflected and strengthened prevailing trends. Social science subjects studied to stimulate social emancipation toppled down the league table, their places taken by cultural and leisure subjects, patronised by a middle-class clientele. Professional and vocational provision burgeoned. There was a new practicality and a new social purpose; courses became shorter; award-bearing provision, particularly extramural certificate courses, flourished.

UAE appeared to have become a service provided by professionals. Courses had to be mounted in an ordered, regular fashion to keep the organisation running efficiently. The machine's demand for more and more students excluded other concerns. The dynamic of UAE as a movement was blunted; its staff often schizophrenically straddled two worlds — that of the university, where they were a 'deviant minority'; and that of the new and wider adult education, where they were often perceived as embodying the alien elitist values of the university.[32]

This was a period of sustained, if unspectacular, growth. UAE seemed to be a permanent part of a swelling educational landscape. It was a period in which Winston Churchill blessed university adult education's past contribution and stressed its future importance 'to the continuity of our Island race'[33] and in which a Committee of Inquiry asserted that '... the high regard which the public has for British universities is due partly to the fact that through their extra-mural departments they have kept close to the people of Britain'.[34] But the changes that were taking place were the subject of detailed examination and debate.

Critics such as Sidney Raybould reaffirmed the need for rigorous provision, for university standards and for working-class students. Others were prepared to justify or accept what was happening. They argued that class divisions were becoming blurred; universities had neither the time nor the inclination to pursue the elusive and uninterested workers; they catered for those who turned up; vocational courses could be given a liberal bent. University standards, moreover, were ultimately guaranteed by the fact that the man (or very rarely the woman) at the top of the class was a university lecturer. All too often this approach simply justified a practice based on a promiscuous pursuit of full registers and fee income.

The tendency to cut with the grain was strengthened by changes in the grant regulations which progressively allowed extramural departments to move away from traditional rigorous liberal education, changes advocated and canvassed by certain extramural leaders.[35]

Their opponents were forced, despite their protestations which left important benchmarks against which to judge what was happening, significant yards down the same road. We can still study today in the past issues of *Adult Education* and *The Highway*, the debates on the 'missing worker students', the question of university standards in adult education, and the relation of vocational training to liberal education.[36] These debates were sometimes resolved by opportunistic practice intended to boost the financial and organisational status of departments, and a florid lip-service to liberalism which facilely assimilated innovation to past traditions. Despite expansion, UAE remained peripheral to the real concerns of the universities. The extramural department remained an annexe: 'small, below the salt, a token, on the fringe, not a central activity'.[37] And the contours of extramural provision established in the years of boom, of a softening of class conflict, 'the end of ideology' and consensus values were only minimally affected by the re-emergence of social conflict from the late 1960s.

As early as the 1950s, Professor Harold Wiltshire had noted that what he termed 'The Great Tradition' — the emphasis on liberal humane studies, particularly social studies, to produce the reflective citizen capable of understanding the great issues of life, the non-vocational stance, the special concern for the working class — was under stress.[38] Some might argue that it had only ever been a *potentially* great tradition. Others might feel that even that statement was hyperbole. Despite its significant achievements in the pre-war period, university adult education and the benefits it brought to thousands in the post-war decades had always been subject to internal stress. Its radicalism had always remained restricted.[39] And its reach had always been limited by lack of resources. Certainly by the time the Russell Committee on Adult Education reported in 1973, UAE rather than incarnating one tradition represented a pluralistic endeavour, structurally and ideologically: courses for trade unionists bedded down with courses for social workers, lawyers and the police. There was a growing interest in part-time degrees. Professional, vocational and certificated provision were complemented by a still large liberal provision for the general public. Conceptions of education for

education's sake, education to do a job, and education to change the world — all had a place at the table.

The Russell Report, seen by some as the third great charter for adult education, did not address itself to the tensions beneath the surface.[40] Looking back, it remarked how stirring it found the 1919 Report and how struck it was 'by the extent to which the principles and values there enunciated are still valid'.[41] Cast very much in the traditional mould, the Report saw education as concerned essentially with the stimulation of the individual's ability to think; to judge; to articulate; to develop sensibility and creativity; to imbibe and develop received culture. In particular, Russell endorsed the 1919 Report's emphasis on the centrality of liberal adult education and its rejection of simplistic ideologies which saw education as centrally concerned with more efficient production and economic growth. In its first paragraphs it quoted from its predecessor:

> We do not wish to underrate the value of increased technical efficiency or the desirability of increasing productivity. But we believe that a short sighted insistence upon these things will defeat its object. We wish to emphasise the necessity for a great development of non-technical studies, partly because we think that it would assist the growth of a truer conception of technical education but, more especially, because it seems to us vital to provide the fullest opportunities for personal development and for the realisation of a higher standard of citizenship.[42]

Observing that, 'these words . . . are even more relevant today than when they were written in 1919',[43] Russell argued that the development of a diverse but integrated system of lifelong education which, it urged, should be accorded priority by government, required a central position for liberalism — and for UAE. Despite one or two gentle criticisms the content and structure of UAE was given a clean bill of health. The best classes enabled students to 'think and work independently in the best traditions of university scholarship',[44] whilst organisationally 'the traditional department of Extra-Mural Studies or of adult education has clear and well tried advantages . . .'.[45]

Perhaps in a slightly shallow, decidedly in a conservative fashion, Russell rubberstamped the traditions of UAE with all its contradictions and all its blemishes. Lacking the 'messianic quality'[46] of the Tawney-inspired 1919 document and lacking its powerfully explicit social reformism, it failed to generate an inspiring redefinition of the liberal approach in terms of the last quarter of the twentieth century. But it did

hold the line. Its underlying conception was of a UAE embracing a continuum of different kinds of course and different kinds of approach. But liberal education would have a key place and would influence all provision. It certainly appeared to give extramural leaders the green light for at least several more decades of progress.

The present challenge

Twelve hard years on, a prominent director described the university adult education fraternity as 'like survivors of a blitz'.[47] The most radical government since the 1940s has treated many established ideas and landmark institutions, in education as elsewhere, as obsolescent. The former chair of the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education trenchantly polemicises against policies which seek to subordinate education to a narrow utilitarianism, a straightened instrumentalism and a cramped philistinism.[48] The images of Wackford Squeers and Thomas Gradgrind are evoked. The situation is a 'nightmare'.[49] An essay on social policy finds individual development and social purpose as a rationale for education in the deepest disrepute: 'educational initiatives probably stand little chance of attracting public funds if they are justified on these grounds alone'.[50]

This is the product of an administration whose ideology sees education as an agent of economic efficiency or a consumption-good to be attained through self-help and the market, which favours training against education, the vocational against the liberal, science and technology against the arts, the private against the public. Universities in particular are marked down for reform. Viewed as strange amalgams of a monastery, a holiday camp and a think-tank of anti-Thatcherism, they are being exhorted and driven to turn education into a product worthy of industry's purchase, to introduce industrial norms of efficiency and measurement into their internal operations and to make the improvement of the nation's economic performances, as defined by government, their *raison d'être*.

The universities after years of political offensive are under siege to the degree that a recent study argues that their traditional values of autonomy, the free pursuit of knowledge and critical inquiry 'may be condemned to marginality'.[51] UAE is even more beleaguered. Its ruling spirits are said by some to recognise that 'The Great Tradition', the

attempt to turn the excellence of the university to the social purposes of those excluded from it is finished: 'what had begun as a response to social need in the 19th Century, has become an outmoded form of provision'.[52] In society at large, it is suggested, there is 'growing evidence of the general decline of the liberal progressive ideology'.[53] Far from constituting a constellation of different approaches infused with liberalism, continuing education, to use the new terminology, is emerging as a category 'soaked in vocationalism'.[54]

The Department of Education and Science, in the context of a confident and powerfully interventionist government, appears to have fully embraced both education for economic regeneration and crude techniques of educational management. They argue that the major purpose of continuing education is 'to promote economic growth'.[55] The University Grants Committee puts forward a case for the development of continuing education 'largely founded on considerations of employment and economic prosperity'.[56] The same body goes on to state that a university is failing if it regards continuing education as simply 'the job of the extramural department'.[57] In revolutionary fashion it further requests the DES to review the responsible body status accorded to universities.[58] The case for abolishing such status is described by a defender of the universities as 'overwhelming'.[59]

In the face of this onslaught UAE is divided. There are different responses to the new political/ideological context related to the different interests and philosophies of protagonists. This, in its turn, is related to the distinctive history of the different departments and universities and their specific predicaments in the new world of 'selectivity' and differential treatment. In certain universities the strategy of developing continuing education through central administrative arrangements directly stimulating internal departments and with extramural departments having a specifically limited role, is explicitly justified in terms of service to government-set industrial imperatives. The rationale is 'that the regional economy must move further towards a high technology base to survive, that it must be supported by a highly trained labour force constantly updated and that it is the social duty of higher education to commit part of its resources to these ends'.[60]

Professional Industrial Commercial Updating is seen not only by government and the DES but by an increasing majority of those involved in the management of universities as at the root of a coming wave of

continuing education, far different from that envisaged by Russell. 'It seems certain', it is predicted, 'that the 1980s will be seen as the decade that saw a shift in emphasis and resources from non-vocational to vocational adult education'.[61] This is seen as a shift in the *whole university*. Even amongst the discerning it would appear to have almost unanimous endorsement. There is, it is claimed, 'general agreement that continuing vocational and professional education is a good thing and even more of a good thing if there is more of it . . .'.[62]

Nonetheless, there are those prepared to stand against the prevailing current and defend liberal adult education. Although UAE is divided amongst a range of different perspectives, cautious support for new developments amongst extramural directors has increasingly given way to alarm at recent 'deplorable'[63] funding arrangements; concern that 'the real issue in the DES is how much liberal adult education is to be pillaged in order to transfer funds to job-related provision';[64] worry that the infatuation with continuing education is 'tending to make adult education with its traditional concerns of social and educational deprivation and alternative patterns of learning, appear to be irrelevant to the needs of the nation';[65] and anxiety that if present trends continue in liberal adult education 'at best what will remain will be a token pimple on the body of the new continuing education'.[66]

State policies for higher education against a background of chronic economic decline are provoking what has long been a potential crisis of purpose and function in the universities. And they are, as part of this wider crisis, bringing up to the surface tensions and contradictions built into UAE since its inception — problems which have emerged periodically in the past, admittedly in a less sharp form than they take today. The initiating deeds of university adult education, the 1908 *Oxford Report* and the 1919 *Final Report* were themselves contradictory and problematic — the products of conflicting philosophies and political compromise. The 'Great Tradition' has always represented mingled influences of social control and social liberation.

The extended debates of the past, never satisfactorily concluded, left an unresolved agenda of fundamental questions. If it is true that the boom years represented, as Fordham has argued, 'a move away from principle and towards growth for growth's sake'[67] it is surely important that in the present struggle for survival we should return to aspects of that agenda in an attempt to elucidate precisely what principles should govern our work

23

today. That elucidation will require a connection of what we can learn from the past with what is happening in today's far more dynamic landscape. In many ways it is a universe away from the world in which the pioneers of UAE thought and taught. The great industries in which many of their students worked are empty shells. Unprecedented economic change and class recomposition are being moulded by a technology they never dreamed of. Revolutionary developments in communications media have both positive and negative implications for adult education. But they certainly open up tremendous new opportunities. And the challenges are still present: we still confront as well, albeit in a very different form, the educational disadvantages which fertilised the seed-bed of UAE. Is the game up for UAE or can we use contemporary challenges and opportunities to overcome old stumbling blocks?

Should UAE, for example, accept a responsibility for economic regeneration and aim to transform itself to cater for scientific, managerial and professional constituencies essential to such change? Alternatively, should UAE reassert an overarching responsibility to working-class students and the educationally underprivileged? Or, should such students merely hold a special place in a pluralistic responsibility to all sections of the community? Or, should we address ourselves simply to those who turn up to a variegated programme eschewing any positive discrimination?

Should UAE maintain the continued centrality of the critical probing liberal approach or should it give itself over to courses taught to set-syllabus and examinations or to more full blooded training in skills and techniques? What should be the distinctive contribution in adult education in the 1990s of the university as opposed to the WEA or a local authority college? To what degree does the traditional extramural mode remain a successful means of organising UAE? Has it not failed as a focus for generating an adequate response from the internal university? Is marginality the inevitable fate of UAE? Did the fact that extramural work, unlike 'mainstream' university activity, was financed directly by an external body, the DES, play an important role in its treatment by the universities as an appendage to more important matters?

Is the education of adults a special art with specific principles and a distinctive methodology or could any competent internal academic prosecute it successfully? To what degree is it possible and efficient for extramural tutors to sustain a multiple burden of excellence in teaching, research, educational analysis, organisation and administration?

These questions are all, of course, inextricably interlinked. As we reach the end of a decade of upheaval in higher education they are increasingly breaking out of their extramural mould. These are increasingly problems not of the purpose of one department but of *the purpose of the university as a whole*. Those who ask what an extramural department should be about increasingly find themselves asking what should the university be about? The central questions of what we should be about and how we should organise ourselves, long pondered and perennially debated in the past, are inherent in today's difficulties. But they have to be seen in a far wider context.

The argument

It is, therefore, surprising that the present crisis in UAE has engendered less 'pamphleteering'[68] than past spells on the ropes. Perhaps this bespeaks its depth. There has been little written on today's problems and their immediate roots. Even the DES has felt moved to call for more debate.[69] Our purpose here is to take stock and to take issue: we wish to combine a review of recent developments in extramural work with a critique of the rising sun of continuing education. In turn, this will require an analysis of the political pressures affecting UAE and an analysis of government policies aimed both directly at extramural work and indirectly through their impact on the wider university.

The next two sections of this essay, therefore, trace in some detail developments in UAE over the last twenty years. We hope that this will have some value in giving context and background to today's problems. Many of the tendencies which have reached fruition in the 1980s were maturing while the Russell Committee on Adult Education was deliberating. We attempt to relate change in UAE to education in the wider university and to the growth of political pressures. We feel that it is increasingly essential to take this approach as education increasingly becomes moulded by the politicians' appreciations of economic necessity. These two sections also contain some assessment of developments and argue that UAE is, in fact, in crisis. As long ago as 1964 (in the heart of what were termed at a Universities Council for Adult and Continuing Education conference 'the golden sixties')[70] a joint UCAE–WEA

publication was entitled 'The Crisis in Adult Education'. The argument here is that even if we have cried wolf too often in the past, the term 'crisis' is surely apt to characterise our predicament in the 1980s. The fourth section, therefore, moves on to discuss critically some of the issues involved in that crisis. Recent critiques of UAE are examined, the problems inherent in the new strategies of continuing education are scrutinised and the question of whether the extramural department is an adequate organisational form for adult education is addressed.

The core of our argument is that government policies, often uncritically embraced by university hierarchies, are on the most sober assessment leading to the gradual dismantling of the extramural departments and the erosion of liberal adult education for all except those sections of the middle class who can afford it. The reaction of the new conservatism to the strain welfare expenditure places on private profitability, what is termed the 'fiscal crisis of the state', has been to seek severely to curtail state spending and encourage the creation of market-based forms of provision. Whilst they subscribe to the manpower-planning ideology to the extent that students are regarded as 'human capital' to be groomed to fill pre-existing roles in the system of production, the 'new right' believe that the universities can best answer the 'economy's' technical needs by entering into a direct contractual relationship with employers. The market is more efficient than state planning. Subordination to its rigours will eventually produce a university sector which is not merely more responsive to economic requirements but which, relieved of the re-strictive control of the state, will eventually attain a greater measure of freedom. Public funds must still make a contribution to higher education but one which will be considerably less than that judged appropriate in the now outmoded Keynesian-consensus model. Indeed, it is the progressive and serious reduction of state financial support, both an end and a means, which will pierce the inertia entrenched in the ivory tower and prompt potential entrepreneurs within the universities to compensate for financial cutbacks by selling their services to industry.

Entrepreneurs, links with employers, technocratic conceptions of education have, of course, always had a role in the English university. And their role was growing well before the arrival of Mrs Thatcher in Downing Street. As in so many other areas of policy, the contribution of Thatcherism is to stimulate and strengthen existing tendencies and

systematise them into a hegemonic ideology. The country's universities representing, as they did, complex compromises between past aristocratic ideologies of liberal education for membership of administrative elites and more recent ideologies of education for vocational preparation are being wrenched from their conservative and elitist moorings and propelled firmly towards metamorphosis into new advanced colleges of technology, managerialism and applied science. Thatcherism in education is strongly meritocratic-technocratic. There is no reason to doubt the seriousness of the government's argument that universities should open their doors to a wider range of students. But in the market model, success or failure in increasing access will ultimately depend upon a successful turn to private finance; and the education any extended audience will receive will bear strongly the imprint of a vocational instrumentalism cast in the mould of training rather than education.

The new model's lack of concern for education which refuses to view students as human capital and which insists on the creation of critical citizens rather than producers of profit is particularly crucial for UAE. Here the new philosophy takes a virulent form. Ironically, the talk in universities is all about the education of adults, or rather of continuing education. But traditional liberal adult education is seen as falling firmly into the province of private leisure consumption and therefore private financing.[71] The programme must be 'economically priced'. In the context of an increasingly educated constituency, and well-established channels of communication to consumers it can easily be mounted by administrative staff and taught by internal lecturers. Internal departments must also be mobilised to participate in what is seen as the epicentre of new developments — continuing education. As it is evolving continuing education in the universities or, continuing education *and training* as it is increasingly and aptly termed, is a long way from the goal of progressive educators: a system which establishes *rights* for citizens to take part in systematic education of *their own choice* throughout their lifespan. Far from reflecting a strategy intended to move in this direction recent developments, freed from obfuscatory rhetoric, illuminate continuing education as essentially a system providing opportunities for employees to update their professional and vocational skills at various stages of their employment career, where employers are prepared to pay for such provision or where state agencies judge it is required to lubricate the labour market or to reinforce the mechanisms of social control.

Moreover the new training is being established not *in addition* to but *instead* of the old education. A variety of pressures — crucially change in funding and cuts in staffing — are being utilised to turn the traditional extramural department into a constituent part of a new university training agency. The function of the new training agency is to link the high level knowledge of the internal university with the training and personnel departments of companies, voluntary organisations and state agencies. The staff tutor, it is urged, must become an entrepreneur and a broker. Nonetheless, it is asserted, with few of the main issues even being considered, that the task of fixing contracts and hustling for business need not detract from scholarly concerns. And it is stated the university will do its best to safeguard critical liberal education, the needs of the individual and the claims of the educationally deprived.

Whether it will succeed is questionable and dependent, ultimately, upon wider political factors. Nonetheless, whatever the fate of the government strategy for the wider university, its outpost — the adult education department — seems clearly marked down for transformation, to answer the needs of the market. The process of change has progressed much further than many are aware or are prepared to acknowledge. In this situation far too many have shied away from arguing the *intensified relevance* of the liberal education of adults in the face of those who always consigned it to marginality and who now wish to consign it to oblivion.

Of course, in the universities government pressures have ensured that if adult and continuing education remains a pawn it has increasingly become a very useful one. Its sacrifice to the market mechanism and the needs of the economy may protect other university activities. In relative terms UAE never amounted to very much; it was never *allowed* to amount to very much. It would, however, be a small tragedy if its flame, which has encouraged so many, were to be finally snuffed out. It would be yet another small but significant defeat for working-class education in the UK.

Prescription is always a problem. Specific blueprints are generally otiose in the face of the shifting sands of state and university policy. That is more than ever so in today's harsh but volatile climate. Nonetheless, we feel that it is unhelpful, and to a degree dishonest, to conclude our argument without a stab at outlining in general terms some of the changes that could safeguard and reinvigorate UAE, relating them to recent proposals from the main political parties. We argue that what the

university has to offer in terms of high quality knowledge and research is still relevant to the majority of the community whose post-initial education is minimal. Universities, therefore, should emphasise the importance of liberal education for the working class as an essential part of continuing education alongside access courses, part-time degree and professional and vocational provision. And they should stop identifying training with education and the community with employers.

A pluralist and integrated university continuing education which seriously attempts to reach *all* sections of the local community requires in the university a specialist centre of adult and continuing education which will attempt to expand and integrate external provision, to educate for change within the walls, so that continuing education becomes as important as undergraduate teaching and research, and which will co-ordinate the efforts of all involved in the field across the university. Finally and centrally, none of this will be possible without adequate resources. Unless those who support these objectives at the rhetorical level put their money where their mouth is, genuine UAE will be consigned to a twilight existence.

We make no apology for the relative introspection of this contribution. Unless UAE gets it right where it counts first — on its home turf — all its external efforts, no matter how strenuous, will be handicapped. After years of prevarication, UAE has to settle its accounts within the university before it can make any adequate contribution to the wider world. Our hope is that this essay will make a contribution to the discussion that is taking place in university adult education and will encourage more people to consider the problems. In particular, at a time when universities are acknowledging the central importance of the education of adults and UAE has an opportunity to break out of its relative isolation, we hope it will further stimulate discussion about the problems and issues in the wider university.

2

University Adult Education in the 1970s — Prelude to Crisis

> . . . the aim of opening a way into the universities for mature students from the working class receded into the background while attention concentrated on developing an extra-mural form of further or higher education regarded as complete in itself.
>
> Brian Simon, *Education and the Labour Movement 1870–1920*

> Rita: 'I was dead surprised when they took me. I don't suppose they would have done if it'd been a proper university. The Open University's different though isn't it? . . . You work for the ordinary university don't y? With the real students . . .'
>
> Willy Russell, *Educating Rita*

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide some background to the problems of UAE in the 1980s. We trace the development of the view that higher education can and should play an enhanced role in Britain's economic advance under the social democratic governments of the 1960s and 70s. The consensus that educational institutions should increasingly service industry's manpower requirements in planned collaboration with the state, was basically shared by the Conservative governments of this period. The increased power to the elbow of the economic ideology was accompanied by a new interest among educators in the idea of lifelong or recurrent education. The view that education, conceived almost entirely as consisting of an initial block of schooling in childhood and youth was inadequate in the modern world, that education should, rather, recur through youth, maturity and old age, was closely related to demands from politicians for a response from the education system to economic and technological change. But the popularity of this idea was perceived by many educators as providing an opportunity for educational expansion on the basis of broader models of provision which would provide a whole range of humanistic as well as practical educational opportunities from the cradle to the grave. Hopes for an integrated and extensive system of continuing education crystallised around the work of the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education.

Having briefly outlined the position in the Extra-Mural world in the 1960s and early 70s, we turn to examine the impact of these ideologies on

UAE. Whilst the overall pressures created closer links between the universities and their extramural departments than had previously appertained, the extended discussions on the need for change produced far less in practice than might have been expected. Governments in this period interested themselves in most parts of the education system. They tended, however, to prod the universities indirectly and tentatively. Nonetheless, the tighter financial restrictions from the middle seventies and the increased stress on the need for education to be more relevant to work roles heralded a deepening emphasis on the economy–education equation which was unlikely to leave the universities and UAE untouched.

This was all still a distant prospect as the 1950s ended and the years of 'you've never had it so good' appeared to stretch invitingly to the century's end. The 1960s saw post-war UAE come of age. A striking feature at the start of the decade was the complacency and lack of ambition in the extramural world. A manifesto produced by the Universities Council for Adult Education noted with equanimity that the contribution of universities had never been great and that only around 100,000 students enrolled on courses each year. It accepted this as the way of the world for 'inevitably the main concern of internal university departments is with their research and their full-time students and it cannot be expected that they should of their own initiative make any systematic or substantial provision of extra-mural teaching'.[1] Nonetheless, the ensuing period was in relative terms one of striking expansion in the extramural world as it partook of the wider university boom. The number of full-time academic staff increased from 265 in 1962/3 to 483 a decade later. The number of courses, excluding joint provision with the WEA, increased from 5,610 to 9,419 and the number of enrolments from 123,503 to 205,416. Overall expansion shielded a significant decline in the number of longer classes, particularly the three-year tutorials, and a 10% drop in courses organised in collaboration with the WEA.[2] It was observed that 'the demand for more education for the educated is both explicit and vociferous'[3] and as the decade developed the reports of individual departments are increasingly studded with references to courses of a vocational nature aimed specifically at professional groups.

There were, however, warnings against the temptations of advancing only on this front and neglecting the needs of adults whose education had been minimal.[4] The UCAE argued that 'the most hopeful development

in provision for adults who left school at fourteen or fifteen during the decade lay in the continued growth of industrial day-release courses'.[5] The educationally underprivileged, it was stated, still constituted a majority of the population. To forget them would be to forget the social purpose of adult education. Courses for industrial workers must remain *one* of the objects of extramural work if departments were not to lose touch with two-thirds of the population.[6]

A central issue which arises time and again in this period is the need for more resources.[7] The UCAE took on more of the complexion of a pressure group than in the past, attempting to engineer new full-time posts with the DES — the full-time staff tutor being seen as the key to an expansion which could then, in its turn, justify additional appointments. Whilst there were small successes with eleven new posts in 1963/4 there was disappointment at the unwillingness of government to maintain this momentum.

Of course there were important differences *between* departments constituted by a wide variety of factors. Some departments, such as Leeds, had been constructed, albeit with high level internal support, in relative isolation from the parent body on the basis of a strong corpus of adult education doctrine. In other situations, such as Hull, the university had been built around the adult education function. The position at Oxford which still retained the remnants of its former Empire was very different from that of a new university like Sussex. Both Sheffield and Leeds became involved in industrial day-release courses around the same time. But by the 1960s the former's input in that area constituted a majority of overall provision whilst the latter's remained on a smaller scale, even though it was a bigger department with a larger catchment area. Bristol was a leader in the second wave of industrial courses but soon moved decisively into the professional, scientific and technical field. Some departments slavishly devoted themselves to 'the programme', others involved themselves in teaching the theory of adult education. In one university, Manchester, the former approach led to a situation where the Department of Extra-Mural Studies had no formal contact at all with the quite separate Department of Adult Education. London specifically limited expansion in courses for trade unionists whilst Sheffield and Oxford, who made perhaps the greatest contribution in that area, did so with very different approaches and ideological perspectives.

The size of the department, its internal relationships, the power and

attitudes of the director in relation to the staff, the conception of tutors as to what adult education should be about, the degree of freedom they could exercise, the nature of the extramural area, relations with external clients — these were just some of the ingredients which produced different educational configurations which were themselves, as we shall see, subject to fairly drastic transformation over-time. Whilst it is important to bear these *distinctions* in mind, *similar pressures* were operating across UAE and were increasingly extended and legitimised by the UCAE so that it is possible to make generalisations.

To take one example, the attempt to use the day-release courses for industrial workers as a means of arresting the dynamic towards provision for the middle classes, at least countering that pressure in any substantial way, was doomed by a caution shared throughout the extramural hierarchy, and an awareness held by many tutors of the dangers of appearing partial. At the root of this was the self-image increasingly held by extramural staff of themselves as subject specialists and the department as an entity in itself rather than as a small part of overall university provision. Thus, the absence of any explicit brief to cater for the working class, and the desire for internal respectability led to the view that it was important for UAE to become increasingly 'a mirror of the whole range of intra-mural subjects'.[8] This conception produced considerations of balance: only a certain amount of resources should be devoted to courses specifically tailored to groups of industrial workers. Other demands had to be fulfilled. Industrial workers, like other groups, had the full general public programme open to them and whilst their lack of participation in it was understandable they could only expect a modicum of special treatment outside it.

The nomenclature 'courses for industrial workers' or courses for 'the industrial community' designated a similar impetus. If departments provided for trade unionists then they should also, in order to avoid any partisan coloration and dependency, spread the educational risk. Provision should be extended to other sections of industrial workers to other sections of 'the industrial community', from foremen to higher management. A variety of other factors, such as ease of recruitment and economic yield, and the tendency for many tutors to find courses for the already educated less difficult to teach, confirmed the elitist direction of extramural work so that it reinforced rather than redressed the social bias of the university.

UAE — into the 1970s

The changes that the 1960s had engendered and the greater confidence they had provided can be seen from the evidence of the UCAE to the Russell Committee.[9] Here we encounter many of the problems which were to take precedence in the succeeding years. They are announced in a manifesto very different from its predecessor prepared in 1960. The canvas of the earlier document appears limited by comparison. There is a new attention to the parent university and to lifelong education and to the economy. Two important themes are immediately introduced: the preamble declares that opportunities for university education should be available throughout life for all able to profit from them and that this provision should be a function of the university as a whole.[10] Clark Kerr is then quoted with approval: 'The basic reality for the university is the widespread recognition that new knowledge is the most important factor in economic and social growth'.[11] The importance of post-experience and refresher courses, arranged by internal departments, or in collaboration with extramural departments, is noted. It is observed that 'it has become widely recognised that it is a necessary task of universities to provide the means by which graduates may keep up to date in advance in their subject'[12] and further that 'Universities will not be able to play their full role in society without further development of post-experience courses on a large scale'.[13] This growth, however, 'should not be limited to refresher courses for graduates'.[14] The term 'continuing education' takes the stage with a bit part.[15]

We find courses for professional and vocational groups listed under 'present growing points'. They are arranged in co-operation with 'a wide range of professional bodies and agencies',[16] and reflect changes in extramural programmes since the 1950s.[17] Facilities for part-time degree study, it is argued, must be expanded to meet new requirements. Moreover, modular structures and credit transfer should be examined.[18] The Hull department's pioneering part-time degree in psychology was commended[19] and the attempt to involve the whole university in provision for the community and integrate training and education through the new centres for Continuing Education at Sussex and Coleraine was noted.[20]

If this all appears almost contemporary, what distinguishes this document from more recent pronouncements is the setting in which the

statement seeks to integrate novel or projected developments. Its commitment to egalitarianism may today appear outmoded. 'University continuing education', we are told, should not be 'simply a topping up process for graduates. If it were this, it would perpetuate the inadequacies and inequalities which may arise through accidents of time and place of birth in selection for higher education'.[21] The statement's dedication to a conception of the university and to a style of university teaching also sounds a little old-fashioned. It is forcefully asserted, for example, that '. . . university refresher courses should offer refreshment not only in factual knowledge but in a style of thinking: they should provide opportunities to renew powers of critical analysis and judgement. University courses should also help people to view their particular specialisms in a broader context than they would do in their normal working lives. We hope, therefore, that these wider aims would be included'.[22]

The induction of new knowledge for economic and social purposes could not be divorced from the promotion of inquiry into the human issues and the values involved. The well-known maxims of the Headlam-Hobhouse Report were reiterated and Robbins was given a fulsome endorsement:

> . . . what is taught should be taught in such a way as to promote the general powers of the mind. The aim should be not to produce more specialists but, rather, cultivated men and women. And it is the distinguishing characteristic of a healthy higher education that even when it is concerned with practical techniques it imparts them on a plane of generality that makes possible their application to many problems — to find the one in the many, the general characteristic in the collection of particulars.[23]

When it came to the organisational front, *University Adult Education in the Later Twentieth Century* confronted questions apparently considered settled by its predecessor. The experimentation of some of the new universities with new adult education formats and the fact that others, notably Lancaster, had specifically eschewed the extramural model had 'given fresh relevance to the question of what is the best form of organisation'.[24] Alternatives such as including responsibility for a proportion of adult teaching in the contracts of internal lecturers were rejected and traditionalism defended. There was still a need for a specialist agency to focus attention on adult education within the university. Those concerned professionally with teaching adults 'need

401.

both regular contact with each other and the support of a professor of adult education or director of professorial standing'.[25] Moreover, the contact between experts in different specialisms promoted the essential interdisciplinary dimension of adult education and the training of new internal and part-time tutors. The development of qualification courses in adult education at five universities was noted with approval. Nonetheless, the need for the departments to be more closely integrated within their universities and for extramural tutors to liaise closely with internal departments was repeated several times. This was undoubtedly related to financial questions.

The hardy perennial, DES or UGC funding, remained contentious. A 'substantial majority' held for the Department on the grounds that the system had proved itself, that dual sourcing provided a degree of flexibility and protection, that the DES had increasingly given greater autonomy within the tripartite partnership to the universities, and, that a change would isolate the WEA. The well-known arguments of the minority, essentially that adult education would never be a central concern of the university until its fortunes were as bound up with the universities' future as those of any other department and that DES funding, at least in a formal sense, constrained academic freedom, failed again to carry the field. There was agreement on one point, given the background of new developments the Council asked for an increased subvention from UGC funds as well as the extension of categories of courses eligible for DES grant.[26]

Russell and its aftermath

The stock-taking the 1970 document involved seemed to have stirred the extramural hierarchy. The following year UCAE accused the UGC of having historically neglected UAE. And they expressed in sharp terms their disquiet that the UGC had, in their Memorandum of Guidance for the next quinquennium, made no mention whatsoever of extramural finance. They went on to castigate the DES for a similar lack of concern.[27] This new forthright stance heralded discussion with both DES and UGC and a higher profile generally. But there could be little complaint about the reception the Russell Committee gave to their evidence. The report's recipe was for modest change. It added to the continuing provision of traditional liberal studies the following:

41

role education of a liberal and academic nature;
industrial education related to human relationships rather than technical processes;
'Balancing studies' to complement earlier educational specialisation;
refresher and post-experience courses;
pioneer work with disadvantaged groups;
and provision for greater access to degree studies.[28]

The section on university organisation was simply confirmatory: on the grounds of accumulated expertise, community contact, identity within and without the university and research capability in the whole field of adult education, universities with specialist departments should retain them. This was followed by the balancing option-maintaining verdict, 'But we also follow the thinking behind the decision of certain newer universities to eschew the traditional extra-mural department and to seek ways of integrating the extra-mural work more closely with their day-to-day teaching and research'.[29] The existing dual grant system was also rubberstamped largely on the grounds that the DES contribution demonstrated the attachment of the state to adult education and that if it were terminated the universities could not be trusted to make up the shortfall.[30] Whilst the committee was impelled to recognise the increasing pressure on university resources, it, nonetheless, urged the UGC to make up any shortfall occasioned in implementing its recommendations. This was not perceived as a problem in relation to post-experience courses for the committee thought that the bulk of such work would be self-financing; although there might be need for some initial pump-priming.[31] Russell was, here, following the advice of the CVCP who argued that the UGC should assume responsibility for post-experience and updating courses.[32]

There was, in general, satisfaction with Russell in the university adult education establishment.[33] But it was understood that all the helpful analysis and recommendations would be redundant without *funding*. It was generally accepted that it was imperative to build firm alliances if adequate pressure to generate the resources for the report's implementation were to be brought to bear. There was continued concern at the attitudes of prominent members of the UGC. In two speeches in 1972 its chair, Sir Kenneth Berrill, questioned the justification for university involvement in the bulk of extramural work and expressed the view that departments should abandon adult education to other bodies such as the WEA, focusing their efforts rather on post-experience vocational provision.[34]

The UCAE's perception of the need for increased internal links and the desire to exploit at least part of the field of the new continuing education led it to mount a new initiative, the establishment of a joint working party with the CVCP. The resultant report bore testimony to the strength of the new thinking and the increasingly familiar terminology, further popularised by Russell, begins to burgeon. There was now 'increasing awareness that universities should accept a commitment to provide opportunities for learning throughout life. Activities associated with such terms as "post experience", "recurrent education" and "éducation permanente" are seen to be of growing importance'.[35] With appropriate resources universities could play 'a leading part in the development of a comprehensive range of post-initial and complementary courses which would truly merit the title "education throughout life".'[36] Endorsing the value of the Russell categories, the Report specifically emphasised 'post-experience courses', 'continuing professional education' and the entry of more mature students to degree courses. Professional and vocationally-related continuing education had not only been discovered: in some universities its provision was now regarded as 'considerable'. Turning to finance, the report stated that DES grant could not be expected to support an extension of continuing education. Such courses were required to be self-financing and, in the present climate, 'there is unlikely to be any major increase in total provision without radical change in the principle of support . . . sponsors are increasingly reluctant to meet the fees necessary to cover even the direct costs of particular courses.'[37] The Working Party, therefore, recommended that the UGC introduce into university recurrent grant allocation an element taking into account the particular university's commitment to adult and continuing education.

This emphasised adult education as a university responsibility. Yet planning of programmes, course direction and administration were often diverse and fragmented. More centralised machinery of co-ordination was required so that *the whole university* might be more successfully involved. For the working party was sure that 'the resources of expert teaching and research experience available within the individual subject departments are an essential contribution if a successful programme is to be maintained'.[38] The report went on to suggest the creation of

> a special Board for Continuing Education which would bring together the various university schools, departments, institutes, centres and committees

> concerned with adult/continuing education. In some circumstances this might appropriately be termed a faculty. . . . Such a Board would have responsibilities for the good health and progress of all continuing education within the University and membership of the Board would include representation of all the departments substantially concerned with the development of continuing education in all its forms'.[39]

In all of this, the role of the extramural department was a recognised one. It was not to be allowed, nor had it ever claimed, a monopoly of the adult and continuing education function. But there is little doubt that the UCAE saw its affiliates as being at the heart of any expansion. No clear internal/external boundaries were drawn. But departments were to continue with their own programmes whilst also facilitating the greater involvement of the university by promoting recruitment and counselling of mature students, undertaking research in adult and continuing education, assisting in market research, publicity and administration connected with adult and continuing education and advising the university on its development.

As this report was being digested, the UCAE (having lamented the failure of its alliance with university supporters, the WEA and the National Institute of Adult Education, to convince either the Heath government or the incoming Wilson administration that they should implement Russell's recommendations) was inquiring 'whether greater priority should be given to its role as a pressure group'.[40] It was also registering satisfaction with the reception universities had accorded the CVCP report which it felt reflected intensifying support for continuing education. Working parties were established in many universities at senate and faculty level to consider the implications of the report's argument and to discuss its findings. Departments spoke of 'the new awareness created *inter alia* by the CVCP/UCAE Report in many universities of the size and importance of their adult education role'.[41]

By the mid 1970s, then, the humility and minimal ambition of UAE had given way to a new thrust and vigour. In this context, growing interest in what was becoming known as continuing or recurrent education seemed to hold new possibilities for those committed to UAE.

The roots of continuing education

As we have seen, these developments were taking place against the background of growing interest in what was variously termed

41

'permanent', 'recurrent', 'lifelong', 'continuing' education.[42] *University Adult Education in the Later Twentieth Century* opened with the statement that opportunities for participation in university education should be open throughout life. Russell had been asked to examine adult education's contribution to the national system of education 'conceived of as a process continuing through life'. The new concept of 'lifelong education' as the principle of the whole process of education which it was now urged should continue throughout life from childhood to old age and, therefore, required *integrated* organisation was developed by UNESCO in the early 1960s. Future democratic societies would have to be 'learning societies' to develop human potential and exploit to the full the possibilities of scientific technological change.

'Recurrent education' which was seen by many as the strategic means of moving towards lifelong education was taken up by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the same period. Prompted by economic considerations, it was initially viewed in fairly conventional terms as '. . . formal and preferably full-time education for adults who want to resume their education interrupted earlier for a variety of reasons'.[43] The French 'éducation permanente', articulated by the Council of Europe, again required that initial education should not be seen as terminal and that it should be reviewed in the context of a system which would allow discontinuous periods of full-time study throughout life, interspersed with work. It was seen as arising from cultural rather than economic problems with an impetus to co-ordinate and extend adult education opportunities rather than galvanise the entire range of educational opportunities.

Recurrent education attracted intensive interest when taken up by the then Swedish Minister of Education, Olaf Palme, in 1969. It was presented as a means of redressing educational inequality. This emphasis was also present in the statements of the OECD. But that organisation placed a greater stress on utilising a changed education system to meet social and economic requirements and produce a more flexible, versatile and adaptable labour force capable of meeting the demands of new technology and industrial transformation. Initial attention by the 'developed' nations' economic think-tank at a 1961 conference on Economic Growth and Investment in Education has been related to the launch of the Sputniks and Soviet technological competition.[44] It was, at any rate, part of the new interest in the *economics of education*. The existing

education system, it was argued, was dysfunctional to economic requirements in that it failed to adequately develop human talent at the initial stages, so that an inadequate flow of sufficiently trained manpower was produced. And it failed further to provide opportunities for those whose employment position in a more dynamic economy required them to develop later in life. Nonetheless, it was claimed that recurrent education could meet not simply economic needs but a range of objectives which were not held to be contradictory. It could create better opportunities for individual development *and* greater educational and social equality *and* play a role in generating economic growth. Similarly, opportunities for learning throughout the lifespan should give access to all members of the community to educational experience of their choice: they should be able to study history or philosophy as well as job-related skills or provision leading to qualifications.[45]

Little of this might appear to be very new. Many of its themes were familiar to adult educators and, of course, the 1919 Report had spoken of a system of education which would be 'both universal and lifelong'. What were novel were the specific ideas developed by advocates of recurrent education. A key argument was that the 'front end' 'terminal apprenticeship' model of education in which initial schooling took precedence and in which further education throughout life was perceived as simply supplementing or remedying the inadequacies of the crucial and determining initial phase was in need of drastic revision.

In other words, recurrent education was not simply about building extensions upon a broadly adequate base. It involved a strategy for transforming the education system in its entirety. There were differences as to whether this should constitute the main thrust of recurrent education or whether energy should be directed first into the creation of a comprehensive system of post-initial education. Morever, radical advocates of recurrent education as a means of transforming the wider society parted company with those who supported it as a vehicle for greater equity and economic regeneration within the confines of the social and economic status quo.[46]

The breadth and the imprecision of these ideas led to criticism. 'Recurrent Education', it was said, was 'a chameleon, its appearance changing with every observer'.[47] 'Lifelong education' was a 'fuzzy, shorthand, politically expedient term offered as a solution to a clump of ill-defined problems which would be thought about more usefully if they

were kept separate'.[48] In the United Kingdom the various terms tended to be used to a large degree interchangeably during the 1960s and early 70s to apply both to the extension of opportunities for education at intervals beyond the initial stages *and* to the development of a system which would establish and co-ordinate such opportunities. There was agreement that any progress would involve relating post-initial opportunities to initial education; but the degree to which this was required and the extent to which a need to change initial education itself was insisted upon, varied.

Terminological and philosophical confusion was common. At the first important conference of British adult educators in response to UNESCO's initiatives one extramural director talked of 'continuing education', another of 'lifelong learning', although both were talking about the same thing. Russell used the anglicisation 'permanent education' for similar purposes.[49] The necessity for lifelong education was argued in Britain in terms of traditional goals such as personal development, the creation of aware citizens and greater democracy, as well as increased leisure and technological development. But 'the maintenance of economic prosperity' in an ever more competitive world and, therefore, 'most conspicuously the vocational needs' were underlined.[50] Such practical considerations led advocates to remark that 'if the educational system of Great Britain has been designed at all (and, of course, it has not) it must have been designed to eliminate Britain as a world power in the second half of the twentieth century'.[51] Another academic took the economic emphasis to its conclusion: education would always be trying to consume more than was available and the final test of lifelong education must be 'how far it is more cost efficient to educate people later rather than sooner'.[52]

Among the central attractions for those involved in UAE was the belief that the interest international initiatives produced, and the new stress on educational growth as essential to the national interest, might provide opportunities, legitimacy and, hopefully, resources for an extension of adult education. Permanent education, Russell observed, had 'marked implications for adult education, staking a claim for it as an integral part of total provision, not as something for the less fortunate or more studious but as something to be expected and experienced by the whole nation'.[53] The emphasis among adult educators was 'on *addition to* rather than *replacement of* the familiar front end model'.[54] Distinctions,

however, were already being noted. 'Continuing Education' was rejected by one extramural director because it lacked the essential idea of discontinuity between periods of education and because of its limiting nature: it had in the USA an already established meaning denoting continuing professional education.[55]

As the 1970s developed, however, the term 'continuing education' became increasingly used in adult education circles at the expense of the other terms as a description of the *overall post-initial system*.[56] By 1980, the DES itself was asserting that initial education could be defined as 'the continuous preparatory period of formal study, to whatever level, completed before entering employment. Continuing education covers everything which follows'.[57] Nonetheless, throughout the period usage of the term in its second narrower sense of professional vocational refresher courses is maintained.[58] The more radical 'recurrent' and 'lifelong education' have less resonance although the more radical ideas involved have continued to be elaborated particularly by the Association for Recurrent Education established in 1975. This body defined 'Lifelong Learning' as a basic concept and social goal involving opportunity for individuals to engage in systematic learning through life as and when they required, 'recurrent education' as a strategy of provision that makes the recurring opportunities for study possible, and 'continuing education' as a term indicating the post-initial stage of this process.[59]

And amongst all the initial enthusiasm there were warning voices. As early as 1967 one distinguished adult educator was ruminating that the more he thought about continuing education in relation to the traditions of adult education the less he liked it. Its danger lay in the fact that ultimately it justified education in economic terms and attempted to utilise it for economic purposes.[60]

Education and the economy

In the UK, education was increasingly thought of in such terms. This was a development which was to have a crucial influence upon the future of continuing education and of UAE. In the early 1960s, the universities remained exclusive and aloof institutions. The English idea of the university, of which Oxford and Cambridge were the apotheosis, expressed itself in antiquity, selectivity, cosmopolitanism, liberal education, domesticity and intimacy.[61] Despite the modernity of the redbrick

48

universities with their emphasis on more links with the local community, a greater openness and a greater accent on vocational training, the aristocratic principle remained dominant. It was still a powerful influence on the new institutions established in the expansion of the 50s and 60s which opened the universities to a greater degree to the children of professional and white collar workers.

This conservatism expressed itself in terms of both access and curriculum. Increasingly, attention was drawn to the narrow class base of the system compared with the 'mass' higher education of the UK's competitors in the world market, such as the USA or Germany. By the middle 1950s there were only 82,000 students at universities in England and Wales compared with 42,000 thirty years before. The student population was drawn overwhelmingly from the upper and the upper middle class. Ninety-six out of every hundred manual working-class children were eliminated from full-time education before the age of 17. The daughter of an unskilled manual worker had a chance of one in five or six hundred of acquiring a university education. By the early 1960s researchers were claiming that the proportion of male students from working-class families at university had not changed since the war.[62]

This was despite the fact that since 1945 there had been growing concern about both the size and constitution of British universities and their responsiveness to the scientific, technological and economic requirements of society. The idea that the function of universities was to provide a liberal education for a small socio-cultural elite had come under increasing challenge. The view that universities were insensitive, if not antipathetic, to the world of industry, ignored their responsibilities in key areas of science and engineering, that 'the medieval and aristocratic traditions of the universities have hitherto acted as a powerful brake against movement towards the technological society'[63] became increasingly prevalent. The Robbins Report of 1963, the formal charter for the expansion of the universities, witnessed a powerful infiltration of conceptions of education as an investment in human capital aimed at economic and technological change and assertions of the need to plan the educational system in synchronisation with industry and economy. Robbins itself attempted to integrate the development of skills suitable to play a role in the changing division of labour as *one* objective of a university education alongside the promotion of the intellect, the advancement of scholarship and the transmission of a common culture.

49

There had to be a balance between the freedom of academic institutions and serving 'the nation's needs'.

But there were many who felt that the needs of industry should take precedence. The 1964 Labour government was pledged above all to a programme of economic modernisation summed up in Wilson's commitment to 'the white hot heat of the technological revolution'. The objective was not to dismantle capitalism but to make it work more efficiently. Industry had to be made more competitive through state intervention whilst state bodies such as the Civil Service and key social institutions such as higher education also required reform. Wilson took a personal interest in higher education and its relationship to economics and industry. The new mood was summed up by the nomenclature of the new Department of Education and Science.[64]

'The ideological challenge to the university ideal, it has been succinctly argued, 'is based on the idea that education is fundamentally an economic resource which should be employed in a way which maximises its contribution to the development of Britain as an industrial nation . . .'.[65] Labour's decision in 1967 to establish an alternative more vocationally oriented system of polytechnics, more amenable to political control, reflected this view. The universities, it was argued, could not themselves adequately answer the demand for more vocational professional and industrially related education. Their autonomy was a barrier to a sufficient responsiveness to the needs of the economy and to adequate control by society. On the one hand this initiative constituted a clear warning to the universities. On the other hand, it embodied a recognition of the fact that there were limits to the degree to which universities should be expected to be directly amenable to economic policy-making. The establishment of the Open University was another vital development. It showed again a certain impatience on the part of the state with the traditional institutions of adult education, and it showed a willingness to *innovate* — to go outside the established structures and make a completely fresh start. If, in a sense, this presaged developments like the MSC, Labour's strategies for educational reform in the 1960s were mild ones compared with what was to come later. And its radical impulses towards modernisation of economy and society had evaporated long before its term of office was up.

The same could be said of the Heath administration of 1970–74. In their educational pronouncements there was some attempt to balance the new

ideas with the old. As the 1972 White Paper stated, 'the government considers higher education valuable for its contribution to the personal development of those who pursue it; at the same time they value its continued expansion as an investment in the nation's human talent'.[66] But like its predecessor its attention was turned towards more obvious economic problems. On the industrial front, the trade union question took precedence over educational concerns. Nonetheless, this period produced a cluster of reports drawing attention to the brain drain of scientific and technological manpower,[67] arguing that there was inadequate student interest in these essential areas[68] and urging universities to examine critically their methods of postgraduate training and skew them less to academic requirements, more to the needs of industry.[69] As the seventies dawned, the UGC was urging on the universities 'a deliberate and determined effort to gear a larger part of their output to the economic and industrial needs of the nation' calling special attention to the desirability of university–industry collaboration and recommending a greater interest in the fields of professional and vocational training.[70]

But the reality was changing, and for the worse. Concern was being expressed at the snowballing growth of university costs whilst there was increasing awareness that the universities were now heavily dependent on state finance. The 1972 White Paper embodied a realistic understanding of the failure to expand provision in the science and technology area as demanded by Robbins. And the political crisis of 1973–4 produced the first important reversal in what had been a triumphant forward march of university funding by the state.[71] The roots of the continuing education conception lay in the economic climate, in the necessities of capital accumulation, economic restructuring and strategies to mould the labour market. Official formulation linked this to humanistic goals. Educators sought to take advantage of the popularisation of discussion to imprint continuing education with their own values and goals. What form practical policies and their implementation would take remained an open question. But in Britain the view that reform of the education system, and specifically here the higher education system, should more closely align education with economic development and utilise it as an instrument of labour market policies was gathering strength amongst politicians of all parties. Universities were now continually exhorted to look increasingly towards work with industry and to augment

their professional and vocational training. There was, therefore, a strong possibility, particularly in a period of sharpening economic problems, that the continuing education which would emerge would not be transformative of the whole education system. There was a danger that what would be forged would not be a progressive strategy for realising the goal of lifelong education. But rather a supplemental and far narrower category of professional and vocational updating and training related in restrictive fashion to the assumed requirements of industrial and economic change would be created.

Organisational change and financial stringency

By the mid-1970s, then, many of the components of the future crisis were gradually taking the stage. Against a background of growing economic pressures for more relevance and consequently greater interest in continuing education, the extramural departments turned towards their parent bodies and found that their interest was to a degree reciprocated. The universities were not willing to revolutionise existing arrangements to orchestrate a large-scale expansion of continuing education. Many of them were willing to make token moves in this direction but were more interested in examining the possibilities for greater control over extra-mural work. This was part of a probing, a testing of the water. In exploring the most effective mechanism for limited expansion the CVCP was willing to sit down with the UCAE and make relatively strong exhortatory statements. It did far less to engineer greater resources for adult and continuing education.

There was a feeling, expressed by one vice-chancellor, that the universities had 'gone too far in sub-contracting their extra-mural responsibilities to special staff having inadequate contact with the main work of the university',[72] that this militated against wider involvement, and that internal staff could 'do' adult and continuing education directly. From the extramural side many 'felt themselves to be inadequately recognised by their universities, treated as peripheral and starved of resources'.[73] By playing an important role in leading greater involvement by the parent body extramural staff might become more recognised, better resourced, less peripheral, UAE could expand its role. The new pressures on universities to produce more continuing education were seen as UAE's opportunities. The UCAE was, however, essentially a

careful, conservative and reactive grouping, structured by the often different interests, opportunities and appetites of its components. Whether such a body could orchestrate a qualitative expansion and engineer for UAE new internal influence as a prelude to an external crusade was, given both its history and the conservatism of the parent bodies, highly questionable.

It was fitting in a sense that Oxford, the historic architect of the twentieth-century pattern of UAE, should now be the first to move towards greater integration and control. In 1969 the University established a Committee on Extra-Mural Studies which looked forward to a firm expansion in post-experience education, argued that employers' ability to pay should be taken as a token of their value, and urged vigorous involvement on a full cost basis. A newly established University and Industry Committee would assess demand and promote post-experience courses whilst the new Department for External Studies should undertake the financial and administrative work, freeing the internal departments 'to concentrate on the academic side'.[74] The committee went on to note that '. . . the Department for External Studies has become isolated from university life and our central position is that it should be integrated more closely'.[75]

By 1973, a committee at Bristol was heart-searching over whether 'all members of university teaching staff [should] carry an individual extra-mural responsibility for the whole university . . .?'[76] At Sheffield an initiative was taken by the Extra-Mural Department itself in the same year. Starting from 'the emphasis of the Russell Report on Education as a "process continuing throughout life" for an increasing number of people', its report, noting the expansion of post-experience courses and using the terminology 'continuing education', assumed that, '. . . the teaching of adults mostly on a part-time basis will become increasingly a main function of institutions of higher education' and that 'this function can only be effectively performed by establishing a Faculty of Continuing Education in a central position in plans for the long-term development of the University'.[77] The chair of the UCAE was quoted in support of this proposal: 'There is, I believe, a good case for establishing continuing education as a school or faculty of the University in its own right, membership of such a Faculty Board including representation of all those departments concerned with the development of continuing education in all its forms'.[78]

The UCAE, given the favourable response to the report of the working party 'which it is hoped will be one of many cooperative ventures with the CVCP'[79] decided, meanwhile, to pursue their internal links further.[80] The vice-chancellors agreed to keep the general development of adult and continuing education under review but felt that 'financial pressures were likely to inhibit major initiatives in the near future'.[81] A later statement from them further stressed the importance of post-experience courses and of an extension of part-time degree study.[82] An approach to the UGC by the working party produced, however, not greater resources for an expansion of continuing education but, instead, only discussions on the more systematic collection of statistics. 'This, it is hoped, will help ensure what council has been emphasising of late, that continuing education is regarded as the responsibility of the total university and not just that of a specialist extra-mural department'.[83] The valedictory comment of Oxford's retiring director on the impact of recent change was also cited. 'At one time we were irregulars skirmishing on the periphery; now we are part of the establishment, a change in role that brings some disadvantages but more advantages'.[84]

From 1975, as the period of financial stringency began and the economic situation worsened, politicians looked to higher education for economies. To some degree this reined in the tendencies we have noted. Stephens commented that university action on the proposals of the early 1970s 'remains limited .... In a recession there is an overwhelming tendency to conserve'.[85] Nonetheless, in terms of curriculum UAE seems to have continued a swing away from the social sciences which began in the 1960s with economics, industrial relations, international relations and psychology losing out to history, archaeology, literature and the laboratory sciences.[86] And it was further noted that 'since the 1960s there has been a rapid expansion in two sectors: post-experience continuing education for graduates working in specific professional and/or vocational fields who require short intensive high level courses to acquaint themselves with the latest relevant research and information; and professional adult education work usually in the form of part or full-time graduate diplomas or master degrees'.[87] This was seen as operating at the expense of working-class university adult education.[88] Others saw developments as stimulated under the guise of an apparent planlessness by the choices of extramural leaders which 'largely escaped scrutiny' and which led to the flourishing of liberal leisure education for the middle class.[89]

But scrutiny was slowly but surely increasing as were the pressures to develop continuing education. It could be argued that the biggest restraint on the universities leading an extended and comprehensive system of adult and continuing education was the competitive existence of the Open University, as important an innovation for UAE as the polytechnics were for the universities as a whole. The UCAE, which as early as 1961 had been asked to investigate the educational potentialities of radio and television, was certainly open to criticism in relation to its vacillations here.[90] In January, 1976, the interim report of the Venables Committee on Continuing Education and the Open University was published. Extramural leaders saw the intention of the OU to develop a continuing education programme of short non-degree courses utilising its rich technology as 'a challenge'.[91] Many in UAE noted with concern its proposals for professional and vocational post-experience courses and its suggestions of a system of short-course credit transfer leading to qualifications.[92]

> In addition to the already competitive attraction of Open University degrees to the traditional extra-mural student, the Open University is now proposing direct competitive provision across virtually the whole range of existing work . . . A casual reader would be forgiven for thinking that the word collaboration was the most frequently used word in the report and yet, there is a striking absence of references to collaboration with other universities . . . .[93]

A further challenge was realised by the announcement, in July 1976, of the establishment of the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education. However, as the UCAE noted, the presence on the Council of extramural leaders was comforting.[94]

More economic pressures . . . and more structural change

It was an economist who observed that, 'it is the vanity of educators that they shape the educational system to their preferred image. They may not be without influence but the decisive force is the economic system. What the educators believe is latitude is usually latitude to respond to economic need'.[95] One might add: *political perception* of economic need.

The Labour government of 1974–9, it has been argued, was influenced, not only by the deteriorating economic situation, but by the belief that the

universities had fallen in the public's esteem.[96] The UGC perceived the first period of the Wilson administration as marking 'a decisive downturn in the growth of resources which has continued for twenty years and is unlikely soon to be resumed.'[97]

Against this background the Labour governments of 1974–9 believed that it was essential to realign education with economic needs, bring the educational system closer to work and industry and answer the imperatives of the labour market. If the universities were to escape relatively unscathed until the change of government, it was a Labour Minister who, as early as 1975 was asserting impatiently,

> it simply will not do to allow universities and polytechnics to produce whatever people they fancy or to relate the number and kind of places they provide to the applications that come forward. We need to estimate our likely future needs for different broad categories of trained industrial manpower.'[98]

Labour's educational policy increasingly asserted relevance, economic instrumentalism and vocational training; the establishment of the Manpower Services Commission provided a stimulus for these themes. It is in this period that educational analysts, despite noting continued resistance from older liberal conceptions, have seen the conversion of the DES to both a stronger economic ideology of education and a firmer interventionist strategy.[99]

Indeed, many of the themes that were to be more stridently sounded after the change of government in 1979 were present and being developed under the Wilson and Callaghan governments. It was Jim Callaghan himself who publicised the issue of the relevance of education to employment and the question of standards. By 1978 the chief education officers of local authorities received a circular setting out 'the part that schools can play in the government's industrial strategy'.[100] The most serious cutbacks since the 1940s took place under Labour. Moreover its insistence that education should be an instrument of manpower planning, in spite of its attempt to integrate the economic ideology with liberal values and welfarism, provided an entry for the right. Their critique was more fundamental and their prescriptions for change far more vigorous.

The increase of direct state intervention in the universities was minimal. However, the new climate of instrumentalism had its impact on UAE. The tension between education as the servant of specific conceptions of economics and education as a means of personal development,

56

education as a means of adaptation to prescribed social change and education as a stimulus to enable students to choose their own paths, can be seen throughout the work of the ACACE. The latter's major pronouncements in relation to universities were, of course, strongly influenced by *Higher Education into the 1990s*. The Model E option for making good the expected shortfall of eighteen-year-old potential university entrants outlined in that paper provided a sharper focus for continuing education. The resources vacated by changing demography could be taken up by a larger entry of mature students into degree programmes and by greater stress 'on more varied forms of study on refresher courses, in-service courses, paid educational leave, part-time study by home-based students, credit transfers and much else of those kinds'.[101]

Extramural departments saw in the DES paper new opportunities. Sheffield, Leeds, Durham and Hull all had working groups looking at the question of mature students. Hull's second part-time degree course in psychology had been completed. Kent had established BA courses in European Languages and Social Sciences.[102] There was a mushrooming of preparatory pre-entry courses intended to prepare students for qualification courses.[103] Moreover, 'many departments were turning to an increase in post-experience and residential courses'.[104] As a result of the moves at Sheffield the Extra-Mural Department was reformed as the Division of Continuing Education with two new lectureships in continuing education. There was similar restructuring at Belfast, Loughborough and Southampton. At Leicester a continuing education unit was established within the Adult Education Department to mount post-experience courses. At London the acceptance of the 1977 Wise Report 'led to a close integration of the department with the rest of the University' and Durham altered its title to become the Department of Adult and Continuing Education.[105]

By 1978/9, the UCAE was noting:

> In some cases, an existing department of extra-mural studies or adult education has extended its range to include the provision of all the university's continuing education. In other cases, the existing department has remained responsible only for extra-mural work with other departments, within the university, providing post-experience courses. Many of the newer universities operate on a third model: a department or Institute of Continuing Education set up to provide mainly post-experience courses but eventually including in this provision courses of an extra-mural type.[106]

Organisational change produced further introspection and external probing. The extramural tutor, it was asserted, was still, 'in the University but not of it . . . he is forever seeking reassurance that he is, in reality, a university teacher and not a poor relation running the university's dubious downtown annexe'.[107] The existence of extramural departments, it was reaffirmed, had allowed the rest of the university to forget its obligations. There was a need for a lecturer with extramural responsibilities in each subject department, 'with the registrar involved in overall administration, and the vice-chancellor more directly as an active overlord'.[108] The need for schools of continuing education was re-asserted.[109] A former UCAE chair now argued that the efficient expansion of continuing education required both regional educational organisation, the abolition of extramural departments and the creation of sub-departments of adult education in each department, linked up in a faculty.[110]

Despite the developments which *had* taken place, the ACACE chair could describe the departments in 1978 as 'marginal to the real life of the universities . . . something which comes near the bottom of the queue'.[111] But for the DES, he felt, they would receive shorter shrift. 'Senior university people will naturally say the right respectful things about their extra-mural tradition and commitment and some will fully live up to their words. But figures and inadvertent comments tell'.[112]

The fact that these kinds of arguments, the stuff of extramural discussion in the late 1940s, were being repeated in the late-1970s showed how small a distance UAE had, in fact, travelled towards acceptance, let alone wider internal influence. It underscored how limited a success its more energetic recent efforts had achieved. Of course many of the leading cadres had been formed in the period of the post-war 'revolution', with the new respectability and resources attached to UAE and the opportunities it presented, compared with the inter-war period. The fact that extramural departments had been given a great deal of autonomy by the universities during the 1940s and 50s also probably exercised a conservative influence. A reading of UCAE and departmental reports affirms a strong current of continuity. The UCAE, formed in the late-1940s, reflected this. It was initially a clearing house for information, discussion, cross-fertilisation of initiatives, solidifying of basic philosophical props and the purveyance of broad philosophy to relevant bodies. The 1970s did see a move towards a more initiatory and

58

prescriptive role but this was still minimal. The basic concern for extramural leaders was their own bailiwick, the often very different problems with their own university and their often very different position in their educational hinterland. The members of the UCAE held disparate views. Many were not RBs. The council therefore sometimes found it difficult to *represent* the views of its members. It was not a negotiating body and had no powers to carry its constituents with it.

Whilst these organisational changes were being implemented in UAE the game was slipping away. The financial background meant that by 1977/8, it could be claimed that 'morale has rarely been so low as gloom and doom resulting from cuts in local authority expenditure pervade the field'[113] and the London department was talking of 'an age of recession'.[114] If this might be thought a little precipitate, by the following year the UCAE was referring to 'extra-mural work in a cold climate',[115] a judgement it found echoed in nearly every departmental report. Moreover, whilst Leeds was pointing to the value of post-experience courses in ameliorating financial retrenchment, Bristol was noting that commercially successful programmes tended to attract 'those who are extensively educated and seek further in-service education and training and are willing to pay high fees or are fortunate enough to have them paid'.[116] Whilst Bristol urged restraint on indiscriminate expansion in favour of the working out of a coherent and balanced system of continuing education many remained unimpressed by the ACACE's theorising towards that objective.

The 1970s saw the forward movement of UAE arrested. The number of courses declined from 9,624 in 1974/5 to 8,337 by the last year of the decade. The drop in the total of three-year courses continued, reaching 589 by 1979/80. Work in collaboration with the WEA also declined. Nonetheless, enrolments continued to increase and contact hours remained steady from the middle of the decade and there were now well over 500 DES and UGC supported staff.[117] Despite the deteriorating financial position, developments relating to continuing education still held promise. But a discerning eye would have been struck most forcefully by the instrumental framework in which it was increasingly set.

There was a lack of strategic thinking about the development of UAE in these new conditions. Continuing divisions further constrained imaginative responses. We have already noted how much was made in the 1950s and 60s of the industrial day-release courses which, it was argued,

represented a reaffirmation of the approach and method of the three-year tutorial class, its successful adaptation to new conditions and new problems, and a re-emphasising of the link between the universities and the educationally disadvantaged. A UCAE Working Party which reported in 1976 recommended a substantial expansion of this work, particularly that part of it aimed at trade unionists. The publication of the report produced divisions and criticisms, formally articulated on the basis that the report was too partisan in relation to trade unions and prescribed too activist and involved a role for the tutor in the concerns of industry and the workplace. Little was done to implement the recommended expansion despite the council's acceptance of the report. By 1980 this area of work was, in fact, in severe decline and the belated attempts by the UCAE to pull the chestnuts out of the fire through approaches to the TUC were a classic case of too little too late.[118]

This episode starkly underlined key problems in UAE. Divisions of interest and philosophy weakened political action and played a part in the further erosion of UAE's social purpose component. But despite rhetoric about 'disadvantage' many were obviously chary about involvement in this difficult area. There was overall a refusal to adopt strategies of positive discrimination in favour of educationally deprived groups which might have challenged the elitism of university recruitment and ensured a return to the compensatory role. The need for balance was applied to the extramural department, not the university, so that the extramural department's micro duplication of the university strengthened the latter's imbalance. Senior EMD staff, indeed, questioned whether trade unionists were 'underprivileged' and pointed out that Russell gave the WEA not EMDs a specific brief with the educationally deprived. Divisions even emerged between those in UAE who saw work in the community as the best means of carrying out a social purpose role and those who favoured industrial courses.[119]

As the Thatcher government took office UAE represented, despite its past growth, the slenderest of commitments by the universities in terms of staff and resources. Despite useful experiments it was harmonious with, rather than disruptive of, a conservative and still complacent university landscape. The role of the universities was being increasingly questioned and there was no reason to believe UAE might escape the reassessment a political change could bring. Given its limitations in terms of imagination and strategy, there were big question marks over UAE's ability to resist any substantial political assault.

3
The Years of Crisis

> . . . the consequences of the complex formula were that resources were tending to move from universities in the North to the South, from large departments to small, from universities which had traditionally invested proportionally large sums in adult education for the community and from areas with a considerable degree of social and economic deprivation to the more fortunate areas.
>
> University of Manchester Department of Extra-Mural Studies
> *Annual Report, 1985–6*

> . . . something of a bombshell was to drop at the end of 1983 with the publication of the working party report on the Department of Adult Education. It effectively recommended the dissolution of the Department of Adult Education and the reallocation of its staff and responsibilities to the Committee for Continuing Education and the relevant subject departments. It also saw the development of continuing education in the area of professional training (i.e. PEVE) rather than Extra-Mural Studies.
>
> H. Mathias, *et al.*, *Continuing Education in Universities: An Innovation Perspective*

Introduction

If the 1970s had witnessed an intensification of political strategies for education informed by the economic ideology, it appeared that in the 1980s education had been dissolved into economics. The lip service paid by the state to any educational purposes other than the need to feed employers with skilled job occupants became progressively more limited as the years went by and as more and more educators bowed the knee to the de-education of education. Bodies such as the UGC accepted the economic ends of the state onslaught on the colleges and universities, arguing only about the means that should be employed to attain them. It was increasingly clear, too, that continuing education had little political future outside a subordination to the labour market and that the broader theories of lifelong education discussed in the last chapter were viewed by the state as the pipe dreams of utopians. Recurrent systems of work-related training were definitely on the agenda. But recurring periods away from employment to study whatever the individual wanted had about as much chance of implementation as Stockport County had of winning the First Division championship! The heady thoughts of

emulating the liberal education for the unemployed of the 1920s and 1930s, for example, came down to earth with a bump as the unemployed of the 1980s were press ganged into training, training and still more training.

The policies of the 1979 Conservative government were based upon a firm recognition of the gravity of Britain's economic and social problems and a critique of the methods employed by previous Labour and Conservative governments to resolve them. The Conservatives' general strategy, based upon a break with the post-war consensus, a variant of monetarist economics and a return to the free market, required severe financial retrenchment in educational expenditure. But if cutbacks were seen as economically essential they were, also, seen as a *political means* of stimulating the education system in the direction of serving market needs and providing a platform for the attainment of other objectives.[1] Past attempts to utilise education as a welfare-good and a means of increasing social equality were to be replaced by a stress on vocational relevance, value for money and excellence. This led the government to proselytise for a professional approach by teachers and attempt to make them more accountable to parents and the local community by defining more closely their rights and responsibilities and by creating more efficient management structures.

The emphasis on standards, however, was increasingly being put forward within a framework of narrow instrumentalism and vocationalism. Education's central purpose has been increasingly viewed as the creation of a labour force

> with the right skills, one that is adaptable reliable motivated and is prepared to work at wages that employers can afford to pay.[2]

Education was increasingly seen as training for economic function but, also, for social control. A DES official was quoted as arguing that

> We are in a period of considerable social change. There may be social unrest but we can cope with the Toxteths. But if we have a highly educated and idle population we may possibly anticipate more serious social conflict. People must be educated to know their place.[3]

The MSC embodied and popularised these conceptions. Since 1979 its powers, resources and resonance have been amplified. A great advantage of this tripartite body for the state is that it is able to act as a direct arm of central government. It can often bypass many of the tricky problems of winning consent and gaining legitimacy which, in a de-centralised

educational system like that in Britain, can limit the impact of centrally determined policy objectives. Once again, it has been argued that too simplistic a stress on the MSC role in direct skills training for vocational purposes can obscure the degree to which its programmes act as a form of social containment: 'the concept of training for the social order would appear more appropriate'.[4] The MSC does not simply of itself extend and deepen the political climate of conformity and vocationalism in education. Its favoured existence can also act as a competitive goad moving other bodies such as the DES in a similar direction.

This strategy has essential limitations. Its central proposal is that it is more efficient to align education with manpower demands through the market rather than through direct state planning. In terms of its overall size, resources and required output, education will then find its 'correct' level and sensitively react to the requirements of economy and industry. A central contradiction has been that in order to push education into the market place the state, since 1979, has had to play a greater role. There has, therefore, been more intervention not less, more centralisation and less devolution of decision making. The 'nationalisation' of the polytechnics and the mooted national curriculum in the schools are only the latest examples of policies which enhance the role of the state and attenuate local democracy.

However, at every level from the universities to the schools the imperatives of government policies have been limited or distorted by resistance. The latter has in its turn produced more draconian measures. The removal from school teachers of their rights to collective bargaining surely bears the hallmark of dictatorship rather than democracy. Moreover, even if one accepts the problematic tenet that education *can* play a significant role in economic change, there are big question marks not only over the specific relationship between education and economic success but over employer perceptions of the importance of education. These issues will become increasingly important if eventual state disengagement — and it looks a big 'if' — leaves employers to make their own choices in this area.

Thatcherism and the universities

Conservative policy in relation to the universities has to be seen within these broad boundaries. More specifically, it has combined a strong dose

of philistinism and elitism with the desire to integrate the ivory tower, together with the other sectors of education, into a service industry for the refurbishing of the economy. Conservative ministers initially appeared to echo their Labour predecessors:

> The way to economic success for Britain is not to go on having an endless supply of people going up — in the most expensive university system in the world — to read whatever course they want. That is the road to an economic Passchendaele.[5]

If there was a degree of consensus on the problem, Conservative remedies for its resolution were to be very different from those of Labour.

The 1979 government was faced with a university system which, compared with the UK's economic competitors, was economically under-resourced and socially regressive.[6] The post-war economic boom had led to large-scale expansion. Seven new universities were established in the 1960s alone. Student numbers increased from 89,866 in 1956/7 to 297,200 as we entered the 1980s.[7] This expansion, blessed and reinforced by the Robbins Report, did not change class inputs. The gap between the proportion of the children of manual workers and those from other classes entering the universities remained large.[8] The rising graph of state subvention meant that universities, by the end of World War II dependent upon the state for half of their income, were, by the end of the 1960s, drawing around three-quarters of their finances from the state paymaster, providing strings which could be pulled if required.[9] The realisation that the planned growth of the science and technology areas in universities, which had been the key drive behind the post-war expansion, had not in fact taken place was dawning on policy makers by the end of the 1960s. A decade later the deficit was estimated at around 150,000 newly qualified scientists and technologists.[10] The British university system still retained a strong attachment to freedom of choice and autonomy.

Moreover, despite increased expenditure, the UK was still 'lagging far behind other Western countries in the proportion of the population benefiting from higher education'.[11] As the Conservatives took office an authoritative study could state

> Our evidence holds no comfort for those who believe that class difference in educational attainment reflects a fair distribution of opportunities to those with the intellectual ability or cultural capacity to profit therefrom.

> Wastage of talent continues and was massive over most of the period with which we are concerned.[12]

Since 1979 there has been growing government support for the view that the educational production of required skills and attitudes, particularly in the crucial area of science and technology, can make an important contribution to economic revitalisation; in this context there appears an ever increasing realisation by the cabinet that the universities are important both for their potential in the production of high-quality knowledge, and because of their position, both real and symbolic, at the apex of the British educational system. The fit between universities and economy would now, however, be produced not by planning but by the invisible hand of the market directly regulating supply and demand. Cuts in state funding would free universities to become more efficient and self-sustaining and serve the nation better by directly answering the requirements of capital through forming a new higher education market for research and skilled manpower.

Despite ministers' views on expense, the government was determined to make the universities more relevant to their concerns without greater state expenditure. The universities were seen in the past to have taken the money and run. Past inducements and past exhortations to the academic elite to serve the nation were seen by the government as having been largely ineffective. The only way to break through their shell of antagonism to technology and commerce was by manipulating the purse strings. Restrictions on funding were perceived as efficient means of ensuring that universities finally entered the industrial market and moved towards training for scientific, technological and professional change.[13]

The 1981 cuts were followed by the recurring programme of reductions. Between 1983 and 1986 public spending on the universities has fallen 20% in real terms. Since 1980, 20,000 student places have been lost. The government's aversion to planning and the attitudes of the UGC meant that the initial cuts fell on university departments and subjects which the government saw as relevant whilst leaving what it saw as wasteful luxuries relatively unscathed. The 1986 cutbacks imposed on an already weakened base led both the UGC and management consultants to point to the strong possibility of university closures. That this was not simply wolf-crying or self-interested rhetoric could be seen from the case of Cardiff. In July 1986, unprecedented direct DES supervision of its faltering financial affairs which had produced an £8 million deficit was reported.

If financial constraints constituted the jugular thrust of the government's attempt to bring universities into the real world of the 1980s, this thrust was accompanied by a cumulative interlinked series of purgatives intended to ensure that the slimmed-down institutions were fit for their new purposes. The Jarratt Report called for greater efficiency within universities, recommending new administrative structures, the introduction of performance indicators and staff assessment schemes. Sustained pressure was mounted on the system of tenure: the job security of academic staff could be seen as a factor strengthening opposition to change and inhibiting flexibility. Attempts to readjust the relationship between state and universities have led to the UGC becoming increasingly interventionist. It is now to be replaced by a far more directive body lacking an academic majority. University salaries and student grants were held down and a degree of government support was given to the questioning of subversive subject areas such as peace studies and industrial relations, whilst the alleged Marxist bent of Open University social science materials was the subject of publicity and investigation.

By the end of 1986, the UGC's evaluation of research across the universities and its allocation of an element of grant related to its results could be seen as a success for the government policy that different universities should be treated differently. More specifically resources *were* now moving to the beat of government priorities. Less money was going to social-science research. More was going to the science and technology areas. However, a change of Minister appeared to herald a recognition that financial cuts had gone far enough if not too far. Nevertheless, the promise of more money for the universities was tied to the UGC being able to demonstrate success in terms of better financial management, improved teaching and research, further steps to selectivity and the rationalisation and closure of small departments. The nature of these policies cannot be underestimated. Ministers themselves have stated that four universities have suffered a cut of more than 30% since 1980 and another ten a cut of more than 20%, counting-in extra money for 'new blood' appointments in important areas. However, the contradictions in the policy must again be emphasised, for in the universities, as elsewhere in education, the aim of greater freedom has led in practice to unprecedented state control. It is, moreover, to say the least, difficult for educationists to improve standards when resources are being severely reduced. A policy aimed at boosting science and technology has ensured

that institutions like Salford, which suffered a 40% cut in its grant in 1981, did go to the market and in accordance with government exhortations *did* concentrate on technology and developed links with industry so that by 1986 half of its income came from non-grant sources. Its grant increase in 1986 of 11%, however, represented in real terms a cut of around 4% and was, in the words of its Vice-Chancellor, 'a miserable reward' for pursuing the trajectory of government policy.

To sum up: policy has been based upon greater state intervention and a reduction of resources aimed at remodelling the function of higher education. Government rhetoric has increasingly argued that universities can and must contribute to economic growth. In practice it might be claimed that policy is informed by a certain agnosticism. Manpower planning has been laid to rest and the test of whether or not universities can stimulate economic development will be proved by the hidden hand of industrial demand and academic supply. The universities will either show themselves able to help industry, or they will emerge as stunted institutions. Within this problematic, the changes in the eighteen-year-old population have not been used as an opportunity to create or plan greater access and changes in university curriculum and organisation. In fact 90% of all spending on education and training is concentrated on those under twenty-five. Instead, demographic trends have been used as one justification for attempting to make the universities more dependent on industry and more responsive to its alleged needs for more scientific and technological manpower and more professional training. Higher education has been increasingly branded as a consumption good that must be paid for. The Conservative project has involved the encouragement of greater competition between and within universities and an attempt to diversify and fragment the role of individual universities, divide research from education and play down the humanities to the benefit of the sciences particularly the applied sciences.

This policy has led to a great deal of heart-searching within the universities. Opposition has been widespread, articulate and trenchant. On the other hand, there were those who welcomed many of its emphases whilst lamenting the lack of resources necessary to mount change in a government-inspired direction. Others saw some virtue even in the financial cuts which, it was argued, freed universities from the constraints of state financial control. Lack of resources, intensification of work and plummeting salaries combined with the general policy framework to

produce demoralisation in certain quarters. Certainly the prevailing mood within the UGC and the CVCP was one of grudging collaboration: if the universities wished to survive then they would have to go at least a certain way along the road the government had constructed for them.

The demise of the ACACE

Extramural tutors recollecting the years since 1979 'each with our stories of what a bomb did here or a landmine there'[14] often find it difficult to recall that the ACACE reports most relevant to their predicament were published in 1979, 1981 and 1982 respectively. The ACACE lingered beyond its effective lifespan. But the 1970s, of which it was the natural child, had already seen assembled the ingredients which were shortly to question the *raison d'être* of traditional extramural work. If the politicians were increasingly discovering the need to bend education to economic requirements, the universities, after the long post-war abstinence, were discovering the political uses of post-initial education and beginning to inquire into both its potential as a placebo for the politicians and as a stratagem for organisational maintenance. For if the eighteen-year-old catchment area shrank then continued university influence and prestige demanded that more mature age groups should be catered for. And such considerations led to a greater interest in continuing education, in terms of both part-time degree provision, attraction of more mature students to traditional provision, and short courses of professional and vocational relevance.

These emphases, in turn, led to greater scrutiny of extramural organisation and financing, which had been observed from a distance in the expansionist 1950s and 60s. And, in some quarters, greater involvement with the extramural agency through organisational rearrangement led to a questioning of what the extension bodies were doing, a weighing of the utility of existing programmes and a measuring of the departments' efficiency in any expansion of continuing education. The universities were looking for possible savings and possible profits from their extramural arms. In the statements of those advocating organisational change there are strong hints that in academic matters the internal departments are pre-eminent; and that development of anything more than normal peripheral provision would require the extramural tutors to play an ancillary and servicing role.

The departments themselves had continued their incursion into the fields of professional and vocational education. If in 1972 they 'concentrated less upon the discharge of an obligation towards the education of the underprivileged',[15] they concentrated upon it even less by 1980. Increasingly they served the already educated. They had, despite their pursuit of the CVCP, failed in the endeavour to place themselves in the leadership of an internal mobilisation in what now appear to be the years of opportunity. As so often in the universities progress on all fronts had been leisurely. The expansion of continuing education seen more and more as professional and vocational courses was in relative terms 'trivial'.[16] The erosion of *laissez-faire* attitudes to extramural work and commitment to mobilising wider university resources to continuing education was gradual and uneven. Fine words came more easily than detailed policy-making, day-to-day planning, and generation or redisposition of resources. To put it simply, conservative universities were not going to take the difficult wrenching steps of moving towards a new clientele unless they felt that there was little alternative.[17] Pronouncement on the importance of continuing education, on the other hand, came cheap.

Such pronouncements were increasingly forthcoming from the ACACE. Their reception in the extramural world was mixed. Whilst Stephens found the Council's *Towards Continuing Education*[18] 'a splendid initiative to be warmly applauded',[19] Wiltshire, who had earlier critically distinguished continuing education from adult education in terms of 'an investment good' as opposed to the latter which he saw as 'a consumption good',[20] remarked on the danger of resources being concentrated on those aspects of post-initial education which were seen as economically productive. In consequence adult education would be left to fend for itself.[21] The Council's major pronouncement which must be read in conjunction with the ancillary document on adult education[22] also occasioned criticism. It was claimed that the statement, *Continuing Education: From Policies to Practice* started and continued with the need to adapt to economic and social change, the need to boost productivity and the need to develop a skilled and more adaptable workforce.[23] It was not in essence, so the argument went, concerned with the UAE tradition with 'learning characterised by a creative spirit of inquiry and by the willingness of students and tutors alike to experiment together with fresh approaches and angles of vision'.[24] It was rather, critics asserted, about

access to existing qualification systems and education tailored to vocational requirements. Because of this focus, it was claimed, adult education was being rendered even more marginal than it already was by subsuming it within a continuing education which was moulded almost entirely in the image of vocationalism.

> The authors of the Russell Report made their case for adult education within the Great Tradition. The Advisory Council has succeeded where many have failed in the past in making the Russell Report appear a radical and visionary document. The Great Tradition which informed the 1919 Report and which was echoed in the Russell Report is inaudible in the Advisory Council's Report.[25]

The critics' contention, that, in the end, the absorption of adult education would entail its reduction and that continuing education would be almost completely given over to professional vocational and qualification provision was challenged by members of the ACACE.[26] Their work was basically in the tradition of Robbins, an attempt to integrate a response to the political expression of economic demands with the more traditional concerns of adult education. If the ACACE did disappoint the wider hopes of some supporters of lifelong education by failing to assault the 'front-end' model of education and failed in the eyes of many of its proponents to give its due prominence to traditional adult education, it did think in terms of comprehensive post-school provision even if its proposals were inadequate. Nevertheless, with the change of government one of its members could note an important development,

> the DES anxious not to cede relevance to the MSC (though deeply envious of its direct financial powers) began to focus its attention and such small sums of money as it could muster on post experience vocational education.[27]

By 1980 any hope of the implementation of a comprehensive system of continuing education was wishful thinking. The term was still used in a broad sense as a rhetorical embellishment and as a shield for the far narrower strategy of stimulating professional and vocational training.

As the 1979 government found its policy feet, claims from the ACACE that 'there could be jumps comparable to those caused by Mansbridge and Tawney'[28] looked simply utopian. That the most significant factor in the future development of adult education was the political one was increasingly accepted.[29] Labour's dedication to the economisation of education had already led to the observation that the assumed needs of

industry was the major force dictating change in the universities and that 'should the British government decide that vocationally based continuing education should be a universities' priority then that is what the English universities will find themselves doing'.[30] In terms of adult education generally the government's attitude was characterised by a prominent member of the ACACE as 'quite disturbing'.[31] Whilst the ACACE continued under Conservative rule and produced much thought-provoking and informative material its impact on practical policy-making was negligible. Its extinction in 1982 removed an alternative focus to the mainstream ideas emanating from government and increasingly accepted by other bodies. It signalled the fact that for at least the foreseeable future there could be little hope for even the minimal implementation of wider conceptions of continuing education. Continuing education would now be developed strongly in the mould of practical training for economic efficiency.

Extramural work and the New Austerity

The UCACE's sense of what was in the air prompted a further approach to the vice-chancellors and agreement to hold a one-day conference in May, 1980, prior to the expected publication of a DES discussion paper on continuing education, to increase public awareness of developments. Representatives of industry, central and local government and the media attended.[32] The rather complacent theme underlying most of the contributions was that the last decade had seen reasonable progress but a new initiative was now required. There were, after all, it was pointed out, some 400,000 adults following continuing education courses at university, compared with 290,000 full-time students, and 'the existing commitment of the universities in part-time and continuing education demonstrated by these figures is very striking'.[33] The UGC, it was asserted, had failed to look after the financial development of continuing education in 1974 but that was understandable at a time when concentration was still upon younger students.[34] Continuing education could now move forwards from an already strong base.

Some of the contributors were more frank: the slowly accelerating interest in continuing education in the universities had largely been related to 'encouraging redeployment and avoiding redundancies'.[35]

Universities had accepted the new brief with 'hesitation or resignation'.[36] A continued public relations approach would not do:

> What percentage of the population was this 400,000? If the possible audience was considered to be 20 million people then it was a tiny share, 2%. The financial commitment of universities to continuing education added up to only 1% of their budget; it could be doubled and it would still be trivial.

Continuing education 'was not being taken seriously by the universities . . .'.[37]

The DES, no doubt, agreed with the last comment although their conception of the kind of education expansion entailed was definitely very different. The Department had already made efforts to stimulate greater interest in continuing education amongst adult educators.[38] Its 1980 discussion paper was to the point: it was about vocational education only. The document's new coinage 'post-experience vocational education' covered updating in specialist areas of knowledge, appreciation of new technologies or processes and acquisition of new skills for job change. Such courses might cover other areas, such as competence in foreign languages, 'to meet the challenge of trade with non-English speaking areas' or statistics, 'to inform and support work performance'.[39] This utilitarianism, it was asserted, was not intended to deny the need for what was now termed 'general continuing education for adults'. But it was impossible to mistake the basic message that the major thrust of expansion had to be PEVE 'if managers and employees at all levels are to be able to meet successfully the complex challenge facing them and to promote economic growth'.[40] Employers, the report argues, must 'bear the main cost of this training for they will benefit from it'. Its development would require the involvement of employers in course design. It would require a change of attitude from universities. They must learn to adapt their provision to employers' needs, which could be identified through secondment of teachers and utilisation of employer-prepared materials. Such courses must become an integral part of university activity and be taken into account in staff development and promotion. There would be a need for some staff to shed teaching responsibilities and involve themselves more in entrepreneurial, diagnostic and consultancy functions. There is talk of the need for new learning methods and credit transfer. But what is being recommended is largely short work-related training provision.

This document was an articulate charter for the new vocationalism, a pithy elaboration of the means by which adult education could be subordinated to the goals of industrial enterprise. The best way of ensuring that universities seriously turned to this market and put aside past procrastination was to reduce funding and create a financial need. Financial stringency was increasing. The 1980 UCAE conference was entitled 'Adult Education and the New Austerity'. Twelve months later a paper to the next conference asserted, 'we are now talking not of expansion but of survival'.[41] It went on to note uncritically the DES statement and suggested that 'the kinds of entrepreneurial work described in the discussion paper are, of course, what many of the staff of extra-mural departments have been doing for many years'.[42] It pointed out that extramural involvement in post-experience work might mean a move towards more an entrepreneurial role and cited the CVCP's view that extramural staff could play a role in the development of PEVE provision.

The same conference suggested that a new realism was abroad. The economic axe might be about to fall but UAE would have to come to terms with the changed world and the shock might energise the parent institutions to extramural advantage. There was deeper reflection. One reporter felt 'There was some acceptance for the proposition that adult education as we have known it had come to the end of a valuable noteworthy and weighty contribution to British society'.[43] The 'modified market approach' was proffered by one director. He argued that increasing pressure to make the universities more responsive to economic needs was likely to intensify and this would mean leverage being exercised to move extramural work from 'the great tradition' to continuing education which was at heart professional vocational refresher courses. Changes in funding to the US model would mean that universities, and particularly their adult and continuing education function, would be expected to become self-financing to a far greater extent. There was a need to avoid undue pressure on staff stemming from the new mission of income generation. However, there was a possibility of subsidising socially useful low-yield work from revenue creating provision. Adult educators were enjoined to 'raise cash and carry on'.[44]

Like many others the UCACE seems to have underestimated the government's radicalism and its cumulative, sustained step-by-step approach. They had been raising cash and carrying on for some time. But

it might prove a more difficult job if UGC cuts were to be a recurring phenomenon accompanied by reductions from the DES. Moreover, at every level in education, the government, the DES, the UGC, the individual university, there was now a strong move to greater centralisation. The Council did point out that

> the debate about new structures is likely to be intensified by the effect of the UGC letters of July 1981. In the context of reduced UGC grant many universities have been turning their attention to income generation as a means of offsetting reduced grant, with the result that faculties and internal departments hitherto not concerned with continuing education, are now considering the possibility of short course and summer school provision.[45]

At Leeds, for example, a major review of structure led to a change of nomenclature in 1981/2 to Adult and Continuing Education. The Department was to remain the primary agent for the university's provision of adult education but was also to turn towards continuing education by appointing a Director of Continuing Education at senior level within the new department. Continuing education was defined as provision directed mainly at those who have benefited from tertiary education and now wish to examine new developments in relation to their professional or vocational role. Adult education was now defined largely in terms of those who did not possess such educational experience. 'The development of continuing education primarily in the provision of short courses at an advanced level of study in association with internal departments should be a major priority within the work of the department'.[46] Once again, it was felt that the department had become too isolated from the mainstream university and it was to be linked with both the Board of the Faculty of Education and a new Adult and Continuing Education Committee which replaced the old Board of Extra-Mural Studies. This was a symptom of the strength of new trends. In the same year the UCAE became the Universities Council for Adult and Continuing Education.

The Council's new appellation could be seen as asserting a wide claim to involvement in all aspects of the education of adults. But, by this time, any hopes of realising such possibilities were slim ones. The revised title could also be perceived as embodying a distinction between the broad adult education and the narrower continuing education and a desire to assert its interest in the latter field. These various differentiations were now being noted in extramural discussion. 'Continuing education', it was

stated in one inaugural lecture, 'has both a general meaning — all courses for adult students which are not higher or further education — and a specific meaning — high level professional courses'. It was felt important to add 'and in this specific sense it is marked off from adult education'.[47] Whilst this implied clear recognition of the limited nature of the provision that the DES wished to stimulate, nonetheless extramural directors sought involvement in PEVE. There was talk of a

> need for co-ordination between post experience and extra-mural provision and for discussing the contributions that extra-mural departments are already making in different ways and in different universities to post experience work — matters with which this council under its new constitution and with its wider remit may be concerned increasingly.[48]

As ACACE dies and with it any final hopes of a move towards a comprehensive post school education, the post experience work becomes more and more prominent. Emphasis on this provision was reinforced by the UGC statement that levels of activity in continuing education would be taken into account in assessing grant.[49] As the cuts bit and student fees increased, it was observed that current policies had, as far as the traditional work went, 'narrowed the opportunities for adults particularly the lower paid to become students'.[50] The increasing understanding that the government's position on adult education was quite simple 'in a quite exact sense they didn't want to know',[51] gave a further fillip to post experience courses. The 13% cut in UGC contribution was accompanied by further DES exhortation on the need to move further into vocational work. The stick was supplemented by the carrot with the introduction by the DES of the Professional Industrial Commercial Updating Scheme (PICKUP) which provided funds for development in these fields. Inaugurated in the spring of 1982 under the apposite banner 'New Knowledge, New Skills, New Machines', its novelty lay in the appointment by the DES of ten regional agents to cover England and Wales and to stimulate PEVE in universities, polytechnics and colleges. For the first time the DES would be employing its own educational staff and this was seen by many as a confirmation of its new role as a direct outreach agency for government policy. On the UCACE's part, as it became clear that PEVE was not to be handed over to them:

> there were strong reservations about the emphasis which seemed to be given to the vocational as opposed to the non-vocational. The two areas,

> conference maintained, should be seen as complementary and the 'general' education of adults as being of at least equal importance to the initiatives of PICKUP.[52]

This attempt to protect traditional adult education and 'to ensure that adult education and continuing education are both considered worthy contributors to a total educational enterprise'[53] was again combined with the argument that if the narrower continuing education was to take off then state funds had to be made available. The DES notion of self-funding, it was argued, was based on the erroneous view that the immediate interests of employers and employees coincided with what the DES saw as the longer-term strategies needed for the national interest.[54] The UCACE was here going a long way towards accepting the government view that the adult education system should be turned to a far greater degree in the direction of economic regeneration. They were simply lamenting the fact that they lacked the resources to carry out the task. The view that the government, on the contrary, saw financial constraints not only as an essential means of reducing public expenditure but also as a tactical method for galvanising further change, was reinforced by the announcement in 1982/3 of a phased withdrawal of 14.3% of the DES allocation. This caused further consernation although it was later postponed to 1984. It made clear that the 1981 cuts had simply been an overture. The future would be very rocky indeed. Despite the stress on vocational provision an interrogation of the admittedly inadequate extramural statistics for 1981/2 underlined how slow departments had been in responding and concluded that the non-vocational courses had been remarkably resilient.[55] It was this foot dragging together with government pressure which had prompted the UGC to establish a working party on continuing education.

The UGC Report and the New Formula

The final report of the working party reverted to a wider definition of continuing education: this covered mature students studying for conventional degrees; part-time degree studies; what were simply termed 'extramural courses'; and PEVE.[56] In a preliminary section 'The Case for the Development of Continuing Education' the UGC specifically based their

arguments, not on the well documented argument that the UK lagged behind other countries in university provision, but on the view that

> continuing education must be developed in this country in order to cope with and take full advantage of the rapid pace of technological scientific legal and social change . . . Formal continuing education is, therefore, a necessity if the national economy is to avoid being handicapped by critical skill shortages.[57]

This primary emphasis on economic and industrial purposes stamps the report. Personal development, education for open-ended social purposes is always secondary: 'Although our case for the development of continuing education is largely founded on considerations of employment and economic prosperity, we do not overlook the importance of social, cultural and other factors'.[58] Past prevarication, the report feels, must end. Past pieties about making continuing education an integral part of university activities are replaced by a formal recommendation that it should be given equal status with research and undergraduate teaching. The UGC itself would establish a standing committee to keep it under review. Universities should collaborate with other institutions, particularly polytechnics, but the required expansion necessitated a big change in staff attitudes, staff development, to take account of mature student needs and the closest possible collaboration with employers and professional bodies. Proposals were made for greater financial support for part-time degrees and there should be greater consideration of a credit transfer system. Universities should take a greater part in employers' in-house training. They should be encouraged to expand vigorously PEVE provision and further funds should be sought from the government to avoid the rigours of the self-financing convention.

The report was not kind to extramural departments. Internal arrangements made to 'promote a particular continuing education function' did not necessarily provide the correct basis to create a university-wide commitment to continuing education as a whole. When the report states that there should be 'an acknowledged focus of responsibility for continuing education, commanding respect within the university', fully integrated into academic and administrative structures, with its own staff and a leader of professorial status answerable to a senate committee,[59] there can be little doubt that it is not thinking about the extramural department. All staff, it goes on to assert, must regard continuing

education as an integral part of their work and it should count towards promotion.

By 1983, twenty-two English universities and four Welsh universities were funded as responsible bodies. In Scotland's different system four universities had extramural committees. In England fourteen universities, in Wales three university colleges and in Scotland four universities were, therefore, excluded from the system. In this context the report commented that whilst the responsible body system had done very valuable work 'by providing support for this single aspect of continuing education in some universities but not in others, the system does produce anomalies which we think are difficult to justify'.[60] The working party formally recommended that the DES review the position, concluding by observing in final obsequiousness to government thinking, that in some cases extramural fees were too low and should be set at 'realistic' levels. Here, as elsewhere in the report, the influence of adult education practice in the USA, where university extension is organised on an entrepreneurial basis as a fund raiser for the university, is strong.

This statement drew together many of the strands of an argument made since the 1970s, put the message more pungently and carried the promise of effective action. It showed decisively that the economic ideology of education now possessed a firm footing within the ivory tower and, indeed, demanded further incursion. 'Industry has a responsibility to communicate its needs and to exploit the great intellectual resources of the universities'.[61] It was a stark reminder of the fact that so many in the university establishment have 'so much adopted a kind of language they think the government wants to hear that by now they have no proper language of their own, no words with which to reassert their full and true purposes'.[62]

The report landed on the desks of extramural leaders in the throes of income generation and lamenting, 'no other university teacher has to walk this difficult tightrope between money making and academic responsibilities'[63] and 'Why did we mount the courses? Quite simply to make money. Have we got our priorities right?'[64] It was reflected that

> there were in the UGC report few (and only brief) references to the traditional extra-mural history and provision and to the problems and possibilities facing the Responsible Bodies and 'liberal university adult education'. In contrast the attention paid to the needs and potentialities of post-experience vocational provision was detailed and full.[65]

The section on extramural work was seen as 'incoherent and confused'.[66] And the hope was expressed that 'the extra-mural provision of universities is not so to be taken for granted as to become invisible'.[67]

What deflected attention from the UGC's recommendations was the more immediate question of a new formula for funding announced by the DES the month previous to the UGC report's publication.[68] This formula seems to have been an attempt to foster state objectives by introducing a form of work-studied payment by results. The formula was intrinsically related to Thatcherite supply and demand economics. And to the feeling that extramural staff were not sufficiently productive, and that departments should move away from the leisurely teaching of leisure subjects or questionable areas such as the teaching of trade unionists, towards science and technology and vocational courses; and that in all of this, they should play a greater organising or entrepreneurial role.

Hitherto, state finance for UAE had largely been directed towards the maintenance of the full-time staff tutor. This embodied certain conceptions of the full-time member of staff as the custodian of excellence in terms of the standards of both the university and of adult education, the crucial nature of an academic and organisational cadre for the UAE enterprise, the necessity for *quality* control. The new formula moved dramatically away from this model. In the context of a 14.3% cut over the three years to 1986/7, 90% of the grant to departments would now be based not on the cost of maintaining staff but on effective student hours, a measure of success in attracting and retaining students. Effective student hours would be based on students who attended two-thirds of the sessions on courses of more than six hours. They would be calculated as the number of such students, multiplied by the number of hours of the course. Weightings would be given to different courses in terms of number of sessions, duration and geographical location; 10% of the grant would be related to the use departments made of full-time university teaching staff. This grant would only be calculated from the overall sum available after the DES had reserved two sums. The first, unknown figure would be retained for remitting to departments fees, waived as a concession to particular groups, such as pensioners or unemployed or disadvantaged groups. The second 5% would be kept back to fund DES-approved innovatory projects. To avoid too sudden a fall in income, in this new competitive environment, no department's grant would be reduced by more than 10% on the previous year's subvention.

This move from the funding of teaching posts to the funding of output would, it was said, 'put extra-mural departments back a hundred years'.[69] Apart from its Byzantine complexity, if applied efficiently, it would *replace courses of quality and educational purpose by those which simply* took account of numbers. It would pay to concentrate courses in conurbations and ignore rural areas. The formula was a directive to ignore pioneer and experimental provision, 'careful work with small groups of disadvantaged people',[70] in favour of course work with a well worn record, 'abandoning projects which bring extra-mural teaching to ethnic minorities and other underprivileged groups ... expensive in resources and relatively unproductive in student contact hours'.[71] The formula would encourage competition not collaboration between institutions and would, in fact, be dysfunctional for government purposes. 'The wise course would be to build a maximum programme in subjects which carry the highest enrolment, history, archaeology, literature, the fine arts and the biological sciences and to cater only for the established educated extra-mural public ... contrary to most of the DES objectives'.[72] The formula encouraged, it was argued, the employment on a part-time basis of already salaried full-time academics at the expense of the unemployed, and those lacking in adult education skills at the expense of experienced tutors who worked for other educational bodies. The innovatory project scheme was opposed on the grounds that the DES lacked the expertise to evaluate such projects and on the grounds that funding for one or two years was, in reality, too short. It was only half humorously rumoured that departments were extending day schools from six to six and a half hours to attract ESH points. The formula was said to have endangered trust and respect between the DES and the extramural world. It was 'bizarre' and it was 'Orwellian'.[73]

UAE's response to continuing education

By the mid-decade the established buttresses of extramural work were being eroded. The DES discussion paper had sketched a system where a central purpose of the university was the promotion of economic growth, where courses were to be vocational training, where the need was for consultation on course syllabus and materials with the employer not the students, where the education of adults was a matter of selling employers and professional bodies what the market required at a price

the market would bear. The UGC expression of an essentially similar perspective was more sophisticated. Whilst it did devote attention to questions of part-time degrees, access and credit transfer, few could doubt that for it, too, the central focus of continuing education was PEVE, the case for change based first and foremost on 'economic necessity'.[74] Under their careful wording the UGC's lack of support for traditional liberal adult education was clear. It was pointed out, for example, that whilst the decision on RB status had been formally ducked '. . . informally the wording of their report leaves little doubt that they would support its abolition'.[75] A later UGC circular, whilst arguing that continuing education should cover its costs without significant subsidy from recurrent grant, recognised the value of some provision from central funds, 'for pump-priming for courses other than extra-mural courses of liberal adult education for which support is provided by the Education Department and local authorities'.[76]

The UGC's advice to the DES on the Green Paper was in the same mould, its new preferences unmasked by its prose sequences:

> providing instruction in skills *and* promoting the powers of the mind remain the main teaching purposes of higher education. In carrying out this role higher education attempts to meet both the needs of the economy for highly skilled manpower *and* the aspirations of individuals for an educational experience which will provide for personal development.[77]

It laid bare under balancing protestations what intensifying political encroachment had made of continuing education. 'Of particular interest in connection with the generation of income are courses of post-experience vocational education which are tailored to meet the needs of individual companies or local groups'.[78]

The 1985 Green Paper[79] with its forty-three commendatory lines on 'In Career Vocational Study' (in the context of a document which mentions the country's economic performance three times in the first main paragraph) as against nine dismissive lines on liberal adult education made the point to even greater effect. The government was not interested in liberal adult education, in critical open-ended education, in education for personal development, in education to understand and perhaps change society. Those who wanted such things should pay for them themselves.

That continuing education would not, in reality, consist of an integrated system expanding and interrelating vocational courses, part-time

degree provision and traditional adult education, infusing them all with the liberal method was now almost universally recognised. By continuing education, 'the universities generally mean self-financing refresher courses aimed at the graduate professions',[80] observed one writer. Another 'distinguished between adult education which he defined as the "great tradition" of extra-mural and extension work and continuing education which he saw as being mainly concerned with providing vocational refresher and retraining courses'.[81]

The way the wind was blowing could be seen from Manchester where the universities of Manchester and Salford together with the Institute of Science and Technology established a Consortium for Advanced Continuing Education (CONTACT). The scheme's initial financing of £250,000 contrasted starkly with the funds available for extramural work and the project was stimulated by the view that '. . . there is increasing scope for a major expansion of advanced continuing training otherwise known as PICKUP . . . or PEVE . . .' Liberal adult education, the initiating statement complacently claimed, was already well catered for by the Manchester Extra-Mural Department and the WEA. The pressures affecting these bodies received no comment. Whilst CONTACT would help by referring enquiries about such provision to the Extra-Mural Department 'its major thrust is likely to be the expansion of advanced work-related training'.[82] The importance of this approach is that it now sees liberal adult education as organisationally and philosophically distinct from continuing education.

Moreover, this new professional advanced continuing education was not a simple co-exister with liberal adult education: it was a possible predator upon the latter's already limited resources. Another director noted that 'there is a greater stress laid on vocational education and professional courses under the title of continuing education than ever before *at the expense* of more traditional fields of adult education'[83] (our emphasis). Yet another hoped that 'adult education's meagre resources are not to be seen as too readily transferable to other, albeit legitimate, areas of continuing education'.[84] Such a transfer *was* witnessed when the DES utilised some of the funds cut from the extramural grant to finance PICKUP in 1982 and the same process was dramatically highlighted in 1986 when the cost of extending the PICKUP scheme to Scotland was met by the government axing completely its grant to the Scottish extramural departments.[85]

Despite the volume of protestation the UCACE eschewed any political campaign of opposition. They placed their faith in low key argument and restrained canvassing. Many in UAE supported this approach. Its leadership was, however, seen by others to have 'essentially agreed to their fate'.[86] At the 1985 conference it was felt by some observers that 'the general mood was one of resigned acceptance.'[87] The UCACE were criticised for not mounting 'a public campaign against the DES cuts on the lines that the WEA is following'.[88]

The new formula was seen as part of a wider constellation of pressures stimulating movement to the entrepreneurial model of US extension but concern was expressed:

> Along with the new formula goes a new flexibility in interpreting the role of full-time staff, releasing them if necessary for development rather than mainly academic duties. Some measure of such flexibility is welcome but when it is the result of automatic constraint it carries dangers for the integrity of the department. How long does a department remain an academic department when its most direct skills have become mainly managerial?[89]

Nevertheless, the battery of stimuli deployed against the universities was creating a turmoil-induced change in their extramural departments. A further growth of PEVE courses in collaboration with internal departments was noted.[90] The intensified decline in provision for working class students was highlighted by the increasing reduction in industrial studies courses mounted on a day-release pattern which had provided an important component of the work with the disadvantaged. A distressing example was the Oxford Department which had fathered university working-class education and which in the mid-1970s had four staff tutors involved full-time in this provision. It had withdrawn almost totally from this field by 1985. The early 1980s saw a 27% drop in one year in these day-release courses organised with the WEA.[91] The turning in to the University of UAE was underlined by a further fall in collaborative ventures with the WEA and 'strained relationships with the Association aggravated by financial arguments'.[92]

One answer to the problems departments faced was to attempt to claw back a greater proportion of the income accruing from WEA classes taught by extramural staff, to reduce the amount of such joint provision and, instead, use their grant aid for their own courses producing 100% fee income for the university. This could result generally in friction and

fragmentation in the field of liberal adult education, a field which demands collaboration, particularly in hard times. And it could produce further reduction in the already severely curtailed element of democratic voluntarism in adult education if WEA branches ran smaller programmes. It might also lead to an *overall* reduction in programmes if extramural tutors already under intense work pressure were unable in practice to take over the organising work carried out by WEA volunteers, particularly in areas distant from the university. This, in turn, could lead to a programme concentrated on campus, inadequately reflecting the requirements of the local community. The WEA itself felt that 'there is evidence of an acceleration in both "fee clawback" by the universities and in the reduction of joint provision. A point may be reached where the WEA itself can no longer afford to be involved with joint provision'.[93]

Overall the situation was a complex one. Some universities without RB status showed no desire to embrace either the DES system or any form of traditional extramural organisation. At universities such as Brunel, Aston and Heriot-Watt, small groups of 'brokers' and 'facilitators' whose job was to stimulate direct liaison between internal departments and employers were established, located at the heart of the universities' administrative structures.[94] At universities with traditional departments, such as Liverpool and Manchester, similar bodies of non-teaching PEVE facilitators were also established, initially with no formal links with the extramural department. Essex, for example, specifically eschewed after an inquiry the idea of an extramural department. This was not necessary, indeed might distract from the need to galvanise each and every internal department to regard continuing education as a part of its normal work. The tasks of stimulation and coordination could be carried out more efficiently by an administrative catalyst, a new Office of Continuing Education. A third variant was for previously non-RB universities to move to a 'new model' extramural department whose 'organisation and aims would differ from traditional extra-mural departments with a strong emphasis on post experience-updating-continuing education ... Staff would have an entrepreneurial role, matching up clients who could be commercial or traditional liberal education students with other university departments'.[95] This model, established by Warwick and contemplated by York, was seen as 'a DES attempt to alter the pattern of extra-mural studies and set a precedent for other institutions to follow'.

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Indeed, it was stated that 'the title "extra-mural" is something of a misnomer'.[96]

A key problem was this: how serious were the universities about their statements that continuing education would become *a central part* of the activities of *all* departments? If they were serious how successful were they likely to be in stimulating those departments into this new field? Had anybody asked internal staff how *they* felt? In a situation of diminishing resources for internal departments what else was to go to make room for this new responsibility? Everybody seemed to be in favour of continuing education. But exactly who was to do the hard graft? Obviously thinking on these questions influenced thinking on organisational solutions. But in this context one thing seemed to be clear to university managers: nothing whatsoever was to be lost by pushing extramural departments in an income-generating direction. And there was little point in throwing more resources into an extramural pot that might shortly be replaced by a new model.

Of course, whatever the DES stance, it was difficult for universities with established structures to move immediately to new models. Despite the ultimate effectiveness of the government repertory of change-inducing agents, extramural staff with tenure still had a number of choices. The problematic status of the RB question also inhibited change in some institutions. However, by 1982/3 extramural departments had lost fifty-three staff, half of that figure in the previous twelve months.[97] The following academic year saw a further decrease of 5.3% in DES-funded full-time posts and of almost 4% in those funded by the UGC.[98] In extramural work such falls in staffing can be crucial. Despite this, Table 1 shows an increase of extramural courses in the eighties of well over 10%. As one department explained,

> In 1980/81 an academic staff of 29.5 with 3 administrators and 19 secretaries mounted 626 courses with 16,471 enrolled students. In 1984/85 an academic staff of 26.5 with 2.5 administrators and 17 secretaries ran 684 courses with 19,032 students on the adult programme and an additional 20 'A' level day schools which attracted 3,777 students.

By 1985/6 that department's overall budget of £1.1 million was funded 31% by the DES, 30% by the UGC and 39% from fee income. This last item had increased from 21.2% of the total budget in 1975/6 and dramatically from 25.2% of the total budget in 1980/1.[99]

This suggests what more general experience confirms: tutors were answering the push to a more income-generating entrepreneurial model.

There was talk of groups of tutors being constituted as 'profit centres'. In at least one department it was accepted that financial earnings targets should be set for individual subject areas and tutors. Whilst it is clear that some departments have tried to resist the regressive aspects of this strategy it is also clear that prominent departments now have programmes dominated by a mix of professional and vocational work, certificate courses, a high-cost liberal sector catering for the middle classes and a strong interest in foreign earnings.

The speed-up in extramural work has been accompanied by an expansion of PEVE. As Table 1 illustrates, the short courses, largely PEVE, mounted by internal departments show an increase of the order of 45%. Using different figures the UGC calculated an increase of almost 24% in PEVE provision between 1977/8 and 1981/2.

Table 2 shows progress in the attraction of mature students to degree programmes. What is lacking is more detailed information on tailor-made part-time degrees. However, one survey concludes that 'the development in universities other than the Open University of a specifically designed part-time degree scheme to fit the practical requirements of adults (e.g. involving evening and off-campus teaching) has been remarkably restricted'.[108] The questionable future of any significant expansion of part-time degree provision has been highlighted by the treatment accorded Birkbeck College, the only university body in the UK entirely committed to teaching part-time students. By reducing the part-time to full-time student finance ratio from 0.8 to 0.5, the UGC stimulated a potential reduction of around 30% in the college's incomes. By doing this it gave sustenance to the view that it regards part-time degree provision, and indeed all continuing education that is not self-financing or profitable, as an unimportant sideshow.

The initial advances represented by the departments at Hull and Kent have not been extended on a wide scale. Some departments, such as those at Leeds and Liverpool, have been able to follow this path. At the other end of the scale, at Manchester it has been specifically asserted that part-time degrees are the prerogative, academically of the relevant internal departments and faculties and organisationally, of a central Office of Part-time Education. In other universities, extramural bodies have not mounted part-time degree programmes, although individual tutors have taught on such programmes, and departments have been involved in counselling and in access courses. At a meeting in late 1986, the CVCP

Table 1 — *University Continuing Education Provision*

	Number of Courses				*Number of Enrolments*			
	Extramural	Extramural/ WEA	Other Depts	Total	Extramural	Extramural/ WEA	Other Depts	Total
1979/80	8403	2236	2292	13631	209,392	36,567	83,590	328,549
1980/81	9037	2142	2832	14011	222,939	37,437	100,738	361,114
1981/82	9531	2240	3583	15354	230,792	42,259	102,513	375,564
1982/83	9978	2411	3835	16224	253,764	32,599	117,730	404,093
1983/84	11158	1932	4107	17197	255,710	33,825	130,309	419,844
1984/85	11279	1949	4761	18071	264,307	35,501	122,728	422,536
1985/86	11644	1990	4556	18190				

Source: UCACE Annual Reports.
Figures exclude Postgraduate Medical Departments.

Table 2 — *Number of Mature Undergraduate and Postgraduate student entrants expressed as a percentage of full-time student entrants. 1974/75, 1979/80–1984/85 (UK domiciled).*

1. Undergraduates

	1974/75	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87
Mature	7,218	8,000	7,811	7,656	6,828	6,657	7,109	7,373	8,003
Total	63,017	74,651	76,387	74,048	71,556	69,153	70,506	70,305	70,731
Mature as % of total	11.5	10.7	10.2	10.3	9.5	9.6	10.1	10.5	11.3

2. Postgraduates

	1974/75	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87
Mature	6,683	7,559	7,498	7,317	7,105	7,808	8,207	8,829	9,683
Total	20,063	19,820	20,107	20,159	19,483	20,820	21,168	21,730	22,802
Mature as % of total	33.3	38.1	37.3	36.3	36.5	37.5	38.8	40.6	42.5

Source: UGC, University Statistics 1986/7, Vol. 1, published December 1987.
Universities Statistical Record. Extracted from Tables 7 and 10.

established a study group on widening access to higher education and the government has now promised, in its 1987 White Paper considered later further support for this objective. By 1987 some in the UCACE saw a more favourable response to part-time degrees and the involvement of UAE in them beginning to take root. It is to be hoped that such a change will develop. Excluded from any major organisational involvement in the degree component of continuing education extramural departments will be destined for an even greater immersion in PEVE.

However, 1987 did bring some respite. In the context of a partial acknowledgement that its educational policies, in general, had been pressed too far or, at least, too quickly upon the system, the government, approaching the end of its term, agreed to a revision of the DES funding formula. In the wake of a UCACE report which illustrated 'that when the varied work of twenty-one different EMDs is translated into the figures required for assessment of grant under the new formula, there are discrepancies, inconsistencies and unresolved questions at every turn',[101] the minister responsible, George Walden, decided on important changes which helped departments, particularly those who had been the worst hit by the formula's gradual implementation. The grant would now no longer be related to the use of university full-time staff and 'Effective Student Hours' would no longer be weighted for length of course — a dubious advance in that it *might* encourage still more short provision. What *was* useful was the assurance that a limit would be placed on grant variations to ensure that no department would experience more than a five per cent loss or gain in income in any one year. Moreover, noting the UCACE's support for the underlying aims of the DES, the Minister agreed that only half of the total resources available would be related to the effective student hours count, rather than the two-thirds initially planned for. Finally, the troublesome innovative project fund would be abandoned although a proportion of grant would be held back, contingent on evidence of pioneering activities.[102]

Some conclusions

The speed at which policies for higher education are being initiated and developed means that specific conclusions must be tentative. Nonetheless the general direction of present trends is very clear. The 1980s have

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witnessed an intensifying drive to subordinate all aspects of UAE to more direct influence from the state and ensure that it responds more efficiently to government policies. That political influence is more firmly than ever in the saddle, can be discerned from recent statements of those charged with supervising adult education: 'HMI is not a free agent and operates within a given framework i.e. current areas of political concern of the centre become the areas of concern for HMI'.[103] And the same might be said of everybody else involved in the field! Given this context, DES criticisms of UAE — 'it's not entrepreneurial enough; it doesn't generate adequate self-financing; it's miles away from the norms of business efficiency'[104] — directly reflect government thinking — and so does the funding formula, the central instrument of policy.

The formula is at one with the general trajectory of government policies, intended to introduce the discipline of the market and competition between suppliers in the context of centrally defined cash limits. The key word is 'cost effective'; it speaks not at all of education. The nature and conditions of funding have always been the key to the development of UAE and the kind of education it provided. The essential message that the new arrangements are intended to realise, is that education is a commodity — something universities should sell to the highest bidder; that successful education is education that you can sell at a handsome profit, regardless of its intrinsic worth or purpose. What Tawney called 'one of the besetting sins of those in high places in England ... bad utilitarianism'[105] is at the centre of a policy whose stress on quantity and income generation directs the Department to the banal, the popular, the immediately relevant. Welcome as the 1987 funding revision is, it is a change of degree not of kind. The direction of future change remains unpredictable.

As with most systems of crude quantity targeting, the final output may turn out to be cheap, shoddy, and unserviceable. The new arrangements are particularly surprising when measured against the HMIs' view that the quality of some extramural work is already lacking, with too few demands being placed on students and inadequate rigour being demonstrated by tutors.[106] Certainly the continued emphasis on Effective Student Hours means that the most urgent and detailed reports prepared by the HMIs after careful and time-consuming inspection of a department will, perhaps, be viewed as of minimal relevance. Not surprisingly, therefore, interest is being displayed by the DES in broader

means of evaluating the work of the responsible bodies.[107] And there is new scrutiny of the role of the full-time tutors from UCACE acting in concert with the DES and the HMIs.[108]

It will not do, however, to view DES policy in monolithic terms. Despite its desire to create a market economy, an 'enterprise consciousness', and a 'stand on your own two feet' self-help society, the present administration sees as a necessary ancillary to its main policies, expenditure on MSC schemes, retraining targeted at specific groups previously handicapped in entering the labour market, and special provision for ethnic minorities. These aspects of government policy may be perceived simultaneously as the sinews of social control, as palliatives or safety valves *and* as removing, in the language of monetarism, 'frictions' or rigidities which inhibit the free play of the labour market.

Policies for higher education replicate this complexity. The determinant ingredient of Thatcherism in UAE is the drive to move UAE into the market place and transform its staff into cost effective, more productive entrepreneurs, shedding 'outmoded' conceptions of liberal humanism and social purpose. But the directions are more contradictory and the picture more subtly coloured. If the framework of policy is turning the University out to face the harsh realities of Britain in the 1980s, social and educational deprivation is part of those realities.

A subordinate theme of policy, therefore, appears still to see some role for 'compensatory' education. There is a continued willingness to support areas of work which *might* meet some of UAE's traditional aspirations. This seems to be affirmed in the DES 1987 communication on funding. Resources for work with the unemployed, for example, remain at a relatively generous level. This could produce in one department courses of the 'how to get a job' type but, in another department, courses of the liberal issue-oriented type. Similarly, it is common knowledge that the government is only too eager to will funds for research and provision involving ethnic minorities. The DES also seems supportive of work in other areas such as access to higher education, new technology and courses for women, provision which could potentially meet many of the goals of those who still see themselves as operating within the liberal tradition. The innovative projects introduced by the new formula also provided opportunities for exploitation by educators; opportunities for the liberal approach and work with the disadvantaged remain.

Events since 1979 have confirmed the view of the leadership of UAE as a cautious reactive body. Basing themselves largely on the view that 'if the government insists on reducing its expenditure there is not much we in universities can do about it — our constituency is weak and we have little industrial muscle',[109] they have not mounted any visible campaign, succeeded in turning aside government intentions through behind-the-scenes methods, nor developed and publicised an alternative reaffirmation of liberal education. There has, for example, been no declaration from the UCACE seeking to assert the continued relevance of liberal values, no well-publicised, well-argued case attempting to insist on a liberal setting for vocationalism on the lines of the 1970 document.

This may be seen as a judgment at once too harsh and too abstract. How could the UCACE be expected to succeed where the CVCP and the National Union of Mineworkers have failed? The revision of the DES formula may be seen as a small victory for sustained patient reasoning and research. The UCACE has, moreover, issued guidance to affiliates on the necessity for a boundary around liberal adult education to prevent the DES grant being diverted into continuing education largely vocational in orientation, for which it is not intended. In healthy contrast to the growing volume of pronouncements which avoid or elide important educational distinctions, the Council points out that whilst provision of vocational relevance is not necessarily outside the grant, a judgment is required as to whether the main emphasis is on job training and instruction in techniques or alternatively, on an open-ended critical examination of the subject.[110]

On the other hand, the UCACE have asserted that the objectives informing DES policy, specifically the new formula, are not in dispute and are not to be decried. 'What causes disquiet at Departmental level as well as nationally in the UCACE is that the new funding policy will seriously inhibit their achievement.'[111] Nonetheless, government policies have been criticised. In its comments on the Green Paper, the Council argued that the attempt to force a stronger vocational, scientific and technological focus on universities at the same time as resources were being drastically reduced, would produce imbalance. The humanities, they urged, were not a luxury to be catered for only at certain levels of economic growth. Rather their study was a *sine qua non* for any healthy higher education system. There was, they argued, no conclusive evidence on the link between increased academic emphasis on vocational science

and technology and economic performance. There could, moreover, be conflict between employers' perception of their own needs and the economic needs of the nation.[112] The UCACE, therefore, if it has not decisively rejected the government's overall philosophy, has not endorsed it.

Statements such as that referred to above on liberal education and their detailed and continuing guidance on the new formula couched in terms of 'recommendations' intended to introduce greater 'consistency' illustrate the UCACE's present role. A certain straining towards a greater co-ordinating role has remained arrested by the Council's increasingly disparate nature. All UK universities exemplifying the entire range of different methods of organising adult and continuing education are now members. Moreover, even in the RB sector it is the universities, not the departments, who are the responsible bodies. And the UCACE cannot make policy or take initiatives that bind the parent bodies. Indeed a certain tension has occurred as the DES has tended to see the Council as an embryonic centralised conveyor belt for its policies and align it to the role many see the UGC as increasingly playing in relation to inter-university policy. The Council had to inform the Department that it was a consultative body operating through informal consensus not a negotiating body. If a lack of imagination and will at times characterised the UCACE, the real problem was objective constraints emanating not only from the government but also from the parent universities.

If on matters of educational philosophy the UCACE has, to a degree, kept out of the firing line, at least it has not declared itself a convert to the Thatcherite economic ideology of education.[113] The UGC, however, moved important miles down the road to the technocratisation of the higher education system and it was the UGC which called the shots. The university establishment has always been uneasy about the contradictory nature of UAE and particularly its social purpose component, messy, time consuming, possibly subversive. In the past there have been times when the line has had to be drawn and the proper province of extramural staff and the permissible approach to teaching demarcated. In the present climate of government support for, and amplification of, concerns about subversion in higher education such unease is likely to grow. It has been stated, for example, that ministers attempted to steer the ACACE away from examining political education, that the government perceives liberal adult education as either private consumption for which a full

charge should be made 'or a seed bed for subversion' and that serious attention will be given to any complaint made to the DES, a charge given substance by the comments in the Green Paper.[114]

Professional continuing education in contrast is relatively safe and straightforward. A commitment to educate society's professionals, entrepreneurs, and technicians sits more comfortably with mainstream university ideology than the mission to the working classes and the educationally disadvantaged. If there is, therefore, ideological commitment amongst leading academic politicians to the new vocational continuing education, an expansion of PEVE by the universities can invalidate the government attacks, placate the DES and make good the state's financial depredations. Put crudely, but essentially, PEVE appears an attractive and direct money-spinner and an antidote.

If the token involvement of the 1970s in this area was prompted by the impulses of routine organisational maintenance, what we are witnessing today is an ideologically acceptable stratagem for crisis resolution. Consequently, there appears within the universities to be almost general agreement on the need to follow the trajectory charted in the DES and UGC reports and a strong desire by university strategists to ensure that this time prescription does not remain at the level of rhetoric. In the words of one of the members of the UGC working party, 'what we must make sure of now is that universities take up this new emphasis so that we achieve an attitude change throughout the system'.[115]

Universities will not, it is held, do this if expansion is resourced through extramural departments. Despite all the UCACE's efforts, the suspicions voiced by the UGC as long ago as 1948 about the work of the extramural bodies and the need to make adult education 'a necessary and integral part'[116] of university activity finally seem to have come home to roost. If expansion is to be organised properly then it must be engineered by internally based professionals and flow outwards, not along the bed of the sluggish extramural rivulet but along a new course, flowing to the customer direct from the centre of the university. If extramural departments are to be involved they must themselves be transformed and this will require greater central control and supervision. Integration of extramural work 'will go further'[117] and the desire to control and orchestrate a university's adult and continuing education from the highest internal power centres will be the key influence on the creation of new organisational forms.[118]

Analysis of the organisational repercussions of present trends, such as Professor Harold Wiltshire's paper to the 1983 UCACE conference which seemed to see internal resourcing of PEVE as leaving the extra-mural departments relatively autonomous, now appears to have underestimated the process of 'internalisation'. Of course, this process is developing with differing intensity in different universities and within the broad framework there still seems to be some hard thinking about optimal models of organisational rearrangement. Diversity still complicates analysis. In one university it can be asserted without fear of contradiction that 'one model does not realistically exist as an option; the creation of a macro EMD in which all CET functions are placed'.[119] Whilst this undoubtedly represents the mainstream thinking of university administrators, it can still be stated elsewhere that 'this department has asserted its role in the whole context of continuing education and has confirmed that it should be perceived not simply as an agency for the provision of liberal adult education to the general public but rather as a principal agency of continuing education of many kinds'.[120]

At Universities such as Sheffield or Nottingham, for example, departments are still in a position to integrate diverse aspects of adult and continuing education running a programme which ranges from involvement in an MEd in Continuing Education through PEVE and PICKUP to long courses for trade unionists and liberal adult education for the general public. At Hull, the department has assumed responsibility for the co-ordination of continuing education throughout the university with special emphasis being given to PICKUP and PEVE programmes. At Manchester, at the other end of the spectrum, the extramural department has no professional adult education teaching function and the PEVE and part-time degree offices are located outside the department. To add to the complexity, some of the departments such as Bristol and Oxford, which have moved a great distance towards answering government demands, are amongst the sternest critics of(the few DES formula and see it as radically dysfunctional to a move towards the new income-generating instrumentalism.[121]

Whilst it is evident that 'economic pressures have called into question the existence of extra-mural departments',[122] the speed and nature of transformation is more difficult to estimate. The continuation or abolition of DES grant is, of course, crucial here and there is an increasing belief that 'the present system of support for liberal adult education will

not survive the decade'.[123] The alternative argument — that DES support gives government a direct power to mould provision and goes to the maintenance of RB status, may depend on the degree to which it is felt that the UGC can be relied upon to carry out present strategies and the speed and nature of continuing education takeoff.

In some cases extramural departments may evolve into Centres for Continuing Education. In others gradual dissolution may involve transfer of staff as 'energisers' to internal departments organising PEVE and part-time degrees or as 'facilitators' to PEVE and PICKUP functions. The universities are keenly aware of government pressures for closure of departments and rationalisation. Some may survive as organisers of the new high-cost liberal adult education sector where according to a minister realistic pricing policies will expand resources and maintain the work.[124]

Again the attraction of the PEVE role appears a crucial influence. The dozen or so departments with a commitment to the study and teaching of adult education as well as extramural teaching are, perhaps, in the strongest position. All their eggs are not in one basket. Their risks are spread. Moreover, the interest in adult education method inside the university provides, for these departments, a potential bridge to involvement and influence in internal developments. However, statements to the effect that 'there is growing recognition [by the DES] that some of the personal development techniques employed in the teaching of adult general education will be needed in the vocational courses to realise the full potential of employees'[125] are often also motivated by the desire to attract traditional educators into PEVE: 'anyone who is concerned with the recruitment of staff for the promotion of continuing education will be only too aware of the paucity of academic entrepreneurs in our higher education system who have the necessary skills and experience'.[126]

If such 'pillage' represents the speediest rate of change, the slowest will be governed by retirement and replacement, if at all, of the rounded academic tutor with the new entrepreneurial administrator. The DES certainly desire a move in the direction of the US system where 'a small core of entrepreneurial academic and business orientated administrators' have created 'an educational powerhouse'.[127] A DES discourse on the virtues of the American system concludes 'Could this not be a model for extra-mural provision in this country for the 1980s?'[128] The question is rhetorical and the weaponry to ensure that the answer is affirmative has been amassed. One must guard against alarmism as against complacency.

But one historically powerful extramural department firmly committed to the liberal tradition has been informed that the university wishes to cut the number of full-time lecturers, already reduced by the 1981 exercise, from the remaining 21.5 to 12 over a three year period. This is explicitly motivated by the greater cost effectiveness of part-time staff in generating ESHs under the new formula. Almost all the trends and portents point one way: to the reduction of traditional UAE and a switch to the administrative bureau model developed in the USA.

4

Issues and Arguments

> Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves
> Who all the sacred mysteries of heaven
> To their own vile advantages shall turn
> Of lucre and ambition . . .
>
> Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book XII

> 'George', Lacon intoned gravely as if he had belatedly found his place in the prayer book. 'We are *pragmatists* George. We *adapt*. We are *not* keepers of some sacred flame. I ask you, I commend you to remember this!'
>
> John Le Carré, *Smiley's People*

So far we have tried to trace the trajectory of UAE since the 1960s, setting it within the framework of wider educational and political pressures which have done so much to mould that development. We have argued that post war developments weakened the social purpose component of UAE while the last decade has witnessed a frontal onslaught on the liberal approach, on the pluralistic programme of provision which developed from the 1950s and on extramural departments as organisations. We now turn to look in more detail at some of the issues which arise out of the challenges proffered to liberal adult education by the state and by the universities themselves. We will look first at some of the views on the future of UAE recently expressed by those involved in the field or close to it. We then move on to examine critically the rationale of the drive to vocational and professional continuing education which is putting liberalism under siege and some of the problems inherent in the pursuit of this strategy. Finally, we give some consideration to the organisation of UAE in the context of the changes of the last two decades outlined earlier in this essay.

The challenge from within

The history of UAE is a history of changes of direction, movement into new fields, the pursuit of new audiences. In the past those who justified innovations have generally attempted to infuse them with the liberal

approach, as in the 1970 UCAE statement, or taken care to assimilate them to at least certain aspects of 'The Great Tradition'. The explicit criticism of that tradition embodied in some recent literature stands in stark contrast to the partial polemics of those who sought to redefine and extend UAE in the 1950s and 60s. At least some of the emphases echo and reinforce the challenge from politicians and from the DES. This does not, however, limit their value. We owe an obligation to those who have taken the field when so many have, through obligation, and/or inclination, been immersed in day to day problems. Given the developing crisis whose salient features we have tried to sketch, it is essential to inquire, as some of these critics have, whether or not the liberal approach is still relevant, and whether or not there is still a role for social purpose UAE with a strong bent towards the working class.

The strange death of liberal adult education

One useful critique by Harries-Jenkins argues that for a number of reasons the liberal tradition's hour has passed. It has ceased to be relevant. It has been undermined in British society because of the decline in liberal progressive ideology, because of social change, involving an extended role for the state and, because of the growth of more extreme ideological positions, the erosion of the consensus which previously existed in the traditional belief system and in the political sphere. The related decline of liberalism in UAE can be observed from the continued decline of the longer tutorial class; problems of recruitment to those classes which *are* mounted; the questionable nature of the claims made for the excellence of such provision in terms of duration of study and the production of written work; and the denial of applied and utilitarian subjects and popular culture by a UAE programme still structured by the ideology of the long tutorial class. The seal is set on the terminal decline of liberal adult education by the increasing and apparently irresistible political power of manpower planning strategies and the insistence of their sponsors that they must be applied to UAE. The conclusion to an insightful polemic is that if we are to capture the imagination of today's potential adult students and meet the requirements of the manpower planners, then we must forget the social conditions of students, reject adult education as a means of overcoming deprivation, lay what

Harries-Jenkins terms social engineering to rest. Instead, we must, eschewing such political aims, turn to access courses for mature students, part-time degree courses and, apparently, some PEVE.[1]

The history here is at least questionable.[2] The 19 years preceding the *Final Report*, the years of 'The Great Unrest' and the Great War, the years which forged the Great Tradition, have been observed by contemporaries and by modern historians as themselves representing a disintegration of consensus, 'the strange death of Liberal England', the growth of class conflict and the striking of extreme ideological stances. Many would argue that the year 1919, itself, was as near as Britain has come to drastic social upheaval this century, and since 1848 in the century before that. As we write, the break from thirty years of political consensus is only recent and political trends show at least some desire by the electorate for a movement back towards the centre.

But even if we concede Harries-Jenkins's contentious argument and accept the fact that we live in troubled, polarised times, days where what have been regarded as civilised and progressive values are under threat, should our response be to knuckle under? Surely we should strive to do the little we can do as educationists for 'tolerance, balance and equality of treatment' using means which, whatever their weaknesses, still have the potential to assert these values. If the state is becoming ever more powerful, if choices of action are more constrained and the efficacy of the action of individuals and groups more sharply limited, is this not an argument for the reassertion, revitalisation and extension of the critical challenge the liberal method embodies? A time when individuals feel helpless before powerful impersonal social forces is, surely, a time of *opportunity* for an education which helps citizens to understand, control and change their lives.

Harries-Jenkins is certainly correct in arguing that UAE has seized this opportunity inadequately. It would be difficult to disagree with much of what he has to say about the alienating and outmoded nature of parts of the extramural programme. However, by making his target almost exclusively the, admittedly important, traditional tutorial class, Harries-Jenkins fails to do adequate justice to attempts to utilise the liberal methods and fuse them with the concerns of students.[3] The long tutorial class was not simply an attempt to impose the outmoded traditions of 19th century Oxbridge upon a gullible British public. It was, rather, an attempt to adapt the best aspects of the universities to the needs of the

working class. Hence the insistence on length based on the argument that given the past educational experience of students time was of the essence, hence also the stress on social-science subjects, discussion methods and democratic organisation.

Moreover, successive generations of adult educators did not simply say 'What was good enough for Tawney is good enough for me'. The history of UAE is studded with attempts, some successful, some not successful, by tutors to adapt the product of the social and political ferment of the early years of the century to new conditions. Anybody who reads the volumes of *The Highway*, *The Tutors' Bulletin*, *Adult Education* for the 1940s and 50s will find a rigorous analysis of the problems of the tutorial class and a variety of attempts to relate it to new conditions and new audiences. Interestingly, analysis of this struggle is absent not only from essays like Harries-Jenkins's but from very different critiques of UAE such as *Adult Education for A Change*.[4] It would surely be difficult to argue that the long day release courses for trade unionists particularly in the 1950s and 60s, the experimental work with the unemployed in the 1970s and 80s, or the exciting recent developments with women students demonstrated 'preoccupation with a predominantly literary culture' or made UAE 'an alien experience' for adults.[5]

Of course such work has never constituted anything like the majority of UAE provision. What the social purpose component has demonstrated through its persistence over the years is the *possibilities* inherent in the liberal approach for an education relevant to the predicament of those who lead limited lives. UAE is, undoubtedly, biased in favour of the economically and educationally privileged. Undoubtedly, it fails to touch most people's consciousness. It would be wrong to overestimate its success in operationalising and popularising the liberal approach. This relative failure means that approach must be perceived rather as an agenda of possibilities whose concrete application requires constant re-examination, review and realisation in new contexts. Nevertheless, we can assert against Harries-Jenkins that there have been success stories. UAE *has* produced education which has been issue based, problem centred, interdisciplinary, critical and subversive, active in its methodology and democratic in its organisation, embodying a marriage of scholastic rigour and practical experience.

What has been achieved illuminates the possibilities. If we accept the argument that, rather than redeveloping liberalism, we should write it off

are we not reinforcing Harries-Jenkins's problem, the irrelevance of the university to the majority of the population? It is difficult to see how universities *limiting* themselves to part-time degrees and professional education can make them more relevant and less exclusive. For much of the social purpose education Harries-Jenkins wishes to write off involves the universities' only real connection with the working class on their own terms, in their own world.

Some of the criticisms of the social purpose component in UAE involve a more explicit assault. The traditional working class, it is contended, is in a state of decomposition and, in many ways, convergence with the middle classes. This renders much earlier analysis and prescription redundant. More specifically, it is asserted that increased educational standards and a greater diffusion of educational opportunities have undermined or severely circumscribed the rationale for working-class adult education and its delivery by the universities. The essential structural characteristic of the working class remains its being compelled to sell its labour power, although any analysis needs to take account of a range of more specific factors such as function in the process of production and income levels. Changes in the nature of the working class have indeed been extensive and important. We cannot explore them here.[6] But it is important to note that even if we discount those professional managerial and administrative employees who occupy contradictory class locations, the groupings which have been termed the 'new middle class', the working class, far from decreasing, has in fact expanded.

The traditional manual working class is indeed in decline, even if at 55% of male workers and around 35% of female employees it remains a substantial social force. But if we can crudely register the changes by observing that Sainsbury's today employ more people than Fords, the woman behind the till in Sainsbury's is every bit as working class as the man on the line at Dagenham, just as the majority of those who work for the NHS are as working class as the majority of those who are employed by British Coal. Of course, material changes — the growth of clerical and service occupations, the large scale entry of women into the workforce, the growth of a black under class — also represent important cultural and ideological shifts. We *do* need to update analysis and prescription to take account of these developments. Important differences *do* exist between these different groups and these will have educational implications. But the working class is changing as it has throughout its history: it is not disappearing.

The basic divisions in the UK remain those of class. Within that primary cleavage specific inequalities affect specific groups, particularly women, black people, and, of course, the unemployed. And as we shall argue in the next chapter, the correlation between class and educational deprivation remains a strong one, particularly for those doubly disadvantaged groups. Britain's black citizens, for example, have been badly served by the educational system. And the universities and UAE have done precious little to cater for their educational needs.

If educational disadvantage is enduring, so is the role that UAE can play in meeting the educational needs of disadvantaged groups. For its commitment, limited as it has been, to a critical social education, distinguishes it from other educational agencies. If the requirements of black citizens or women or manual workers in the 1980s are different from those of the working class of yesteryear, there is nothing to suggest that they can be satisfied by MSC training courses, while the numbers of students from educationally disadvantaged groups enrolling on Open University courses remain small. If universities are serious about serving their local communities, they will see involvement with the large and variegated sections of those communities that have minimal experience of education after the age of 15 or 16 as the touchstone of success.

In this context there are three underlying problems with Harries-Jenkins' prescriptions. Firstly, they do not, as he appears to believe, eschew social purpose and politics. To move from today's UAE to part-time degrees and professional education, presumably recruiting the same social mix as internal undergraduates, is simply to trade in one social purpose for another. If we accept the proffered argument and pull up the university drawbridge we will be limiting our audience and our concerns. We will be directly involved in social engineering. Only this time we will be engineering the maintenance or accepting an extension of educational and therefore social inequality. We will be taking a political decision.

Secondly, the opportunities for the involvement of UAE at least at an *organisational* level in the main component of the strategy urged here, part-time degrees, appears, as we have noted, to be limited.[7] Thirdly, the argument seems both to overestimate and misunderstand the external management strategies. The discussion of such strategies is both cogent and critical. The rationale for accepting their inevitable impact on adult education is left inexplicit and seems to rest on *force majeure*: it is impossible for educators to resist successfully political pressures.

However, present-day strategies are the product of political change and can themselves be replaced, at least to some degree, by political change. What is in contention here is a certain fatalism which informs much of the leadership of adult education. Educators are not just helpless playthings of political fate. Whilst their bargaining power is severely limited they do have some ability to influence political decisions about education. Finally, the corrosive impact of manpower strategies on UAE is here severely underestimated. As the author recently pointed out the imperatives embodied in the recent DES regulations are so drastic 'that it no longer behoves us to provide courses of university quality'.[8]

A related critique by Crombie also demands approbation for its trenchancy and its imaginative elaboration of alternatives to the liberal tradition.[9] That tradition, he argues, has lost its vitality and its relevance. UAE's well adumbrated characteristics are, in fact, secondary. Its basic principles are the same as those of the internal academy: subject-based, rational, premised upon belief in our ability to know the truth of a world 'out there'. These principles, in turn, derive from the dominance of empiricism: it has dominated science and hence western educational systems. Today, insights from fields as diverse as philosophy, ecology, eastern religion, human awareness and physics, denying the distinction between the individual and the world, provide the basis for an alternative epistemology and, therefore, an alternative learning. In this new paradigm knowledge is simply continuous with common sense. The teacher, therefore, becomes a facilitator and creator of learning settings. The new holistic, non-reductionist epistemology is proposed as the model for a transformative educational practice. Crombie's specific conclusions relevant to our discussion require the extramural department to move into the university to stimulate a greater utilisation of its resources for adult education. They chime with official prescription in their advocacy of a firmer entrepreneurial role for the UAE lecturer. Commitments to a conception of the extramural department or the university as a vehicle for social engineering are, it is argued, politically naive. The main thrust of extramural work should involve continuing education with professional organisations and community groups. 'Continuing education should become the essential distinguishing feature of university adult education'.[10]

Much of Crombie's argument against present day UAE is well sustained and hits its target with precision. As with Harries-Jenkins, we

103

find ourselves in disagreement with his conclusions. The assault on social engineering, for example, contains two main related prongs. It hasn't worked: education, he claims, is an ineffective means of stimulating socio-economic change. Moreover, the educationally deprived are casualties who do not want a second chance to return to the fray, '. . . the facts of the matter are in stark contrast to much of the rhetoric about second chance and working class education'.[11]

It is certainly true that attempts to use the educational systems to engineer progressive change have been relatively unsuccessful. However, it is surely important to inquire why this has been so, rather than simply to write off the endeavour, a reaction which will simply reinforce the elitism of universities. In reality, attempts to use education as a means towards greater opportunity and great equality have been ill-thought through, limited and faint-hearted. They have, crucially, been inadequately synchronised with what is an essential precondition for any success in the educational sphere; a primary assault on the economic roots of inequality. In that context, education *can* make a *limited* contribution. But we have to accept that educational reforms by themselves as *a substitute* for a wider political strategy will falter. They must constitute an integrated component within such a strategy. Against this background an awareness of past failure may spur not a writing-off but a renewed effort.

Similarly, it would be wrong to underestimate the disillusion and cynicism that an unsatisfactory experience of initial education can breed. Crombie's point is an important one. Many of the changes within the working class such as the attenuation of traditional bonds of community and solidarity, the debilitation of independent culture and institutions and a loss of faith in education, changes which take place within an increasingly potent socialisation for subordination, require recognition by educators. But it would also be wrong both to underestimate the demand for a second chance orientation that does already exist[12] and the degree to which a *well resourced, imaginative campaign*, designed to bring the existence of extended educational opportunities to the attention of the educationally deprived and apathetic, could galvanise the existing position. This is a key point: the gross under-resourcing of UAE by universities and state has inhibited its role as a *stimulator* of education and reinforced both its marginalisation and the apathy amongst its constituency. A campaigning approach is a *sine qua non* for any real

extension of educational opportunities. One feels that the passive recognition by educators of demoralisation amongst the educationally deprived found in some recent analyses can, in contrast, only strengthen the view amongst working class people that the education system is not relevant to their predicament.

One critic has asked what is the relationship between Crombie's epistemology and his conclusions that universities should move to activities geared to the needs of professional groups and organisations.[13] It is indeed this relationship between epistemology and education which is at the heart of Crombie's analysis and its limits. The assertion that empiricism has dominated science is, in itself, simplistic, ignoring the progress that has been made through theory construction. Moreover, a whole *range* of influences have determined educational systems. The emphasis on epistemology is highly selective. Centrally, where in Crombie's essay is the alleged correspondence between epistemology and educational practice traced and justified? Presumably, the author would agree that there is no *necessary* correspondence between the conditions under which knowledge is acquired in the scientific project and the way it is acquired in an educational system. We cannot simply read off an educational practice from an epistemology. UAE in Britain, for example, has involved a variety of conflicting ideological frameworks and learning methodologies. We would, therefore, argue that there is a *non sequitur* in the jump between Crombie's discussion of epistemology and his educational recommendations.

If we examine the latter, then, despite their careful language — Crombie argues that liberal adult education should continue alongside new developments, that the turn to income generation can help subsidise less lucrative work and that lectures have a place within the new facilitative methodology — it is difficult to disagree with the judgment that their main thrust 'would lead to a UAE structure both more similar to that which predominates in the USA and more congruent with current government policies towards UAE'.[14]

In America, thinking similar to Crombie's has developed in response to problems encountered within professional practice and education.[15] The kind of 'progressive' educational methodology advocated for British UAE is applied in the USA with groups of the already well-educated in professional or leisure settings. Rockhill vividly evokes the ethos of this kind of provision, targeted at the young urban professionals as part

leisure consumption-good, part therapy. Designed to please, it is all process, no content. She observes that in the USA, '... the methodologies of adult education are becoming very inappropriate for work with people who are not highly educated, for work oriented towards the development of critical skills or social transformation ...'.[16]

Crombie's methodological emphasis is integrated with the thrust of his prescription, the turn towards continuing education for professional groups. The facilitative methods of andragogy may make sense for those who already possess a stock of knowledge and a grounding in educational process. Working-class students, in contrast, will lack the existing knowledge-culture that opens so many doors in our society, not least the doors to further and more exciting education. Crombie's approach could generate a revitalised, more worldly, but still rigorously class-based university. This is because the view that science is common sense, that the acquisition of established knowledge is not important and/or sometimes difficult, carries dangers for working-class students or potential students. As against epistemological relativism applied to education we would agree with Stuart Hall that 'there is no escape into nature from the tough and difficult business of designing a curriculum for a specific set of social purposes. There is nothing simple about the disciplines which are required really to know anything and no easy escape from them.'[17]

This has to be our starting point. We also need a critique of the way in which the University, on the whole, has systematically devalued the experience and, in the widest sense, the cultural production of the working class. We have to address both the limited kind of knowledge offered by the university, its fragmentation, and the inadequacy of its learning methods. Any coherent emphasis on a pedagogy which stresses the self-activity of the student, the value of his or her experience, the utility of breaking down barriers between different subject areas, must also stress the necessity of bringing experience into collision with established knowledge. We must insist that that experience requires critical scrutiny; that, in itself, it is inadequate. Students must read books, write essays, absorb research methods if the limitations of existing knowledge are to be critically confronted and overcome.

There *are* things to be learnt. There is a need to acquire not only a stock of knowledge but the values and the methods necessary for its deepening and development. The working-class student requires this basic education that those who have studied to 18 or 23 have already acquired. A

pedagogy which took for granted the pre-existing accomplishment of the latter group would only in the end patronise and penalise the former. And if we believe with proponents of recent change that 'there is a social duty to ensure that the university serves all sections of the regional community'[18] then we cannot avoid the problem of the pre-existing educational experience of the working class and its severe limitations, and a consideration of how working-class students can find entry into the cultural gains of the past and the essential basis for future educational development — the established knowledge. In making this point we cannot, however, ignore the ideological structures in which the 'established knowledge base' is acquired. The traditional conservative university generated a knowledge related broadly to the radical and ideological concerns of the ruling elites, not the majority of citizens. Within those ideological boundaries there existed a degree of intellectual autonomy and the possibilities of a free and liberal higher education for a tiny minority. Now there is an attempt to relate universities more narrowly to the material and ideological priorities of capitalism.

Today's struggle to bring the universities into the utilitarian terrain inhabited by the public education bodies can, if successful, by limiting the liberal tradition of education, further close down that vital space.

A farewell to academe

This position seems to be questioned by at least some amongst another group of educators who have criticised UAE in explicitly Marxist terms, drawing on Althusser and Gramsci to locate it as a component in the structure of bourgeois hegemony.[19] We are indebted to this group for their analysis of the way adult education operates in a class society. However, as has been pointed out, much of this writing is at a generalised, abstract level[20] and tends to reduce the educational to the political. Specific prescription is generally only hinted at but the broad approach appears to involve an attempt to transform the university into a powerhouse of Marxism. As Taylor and his colleagues argue, this analysis even within its own terms tends to pay little attention to the real balance of forces both in education and the wider society, nor to the contradictions that exist within a UAE which is far from monolithic and indeed provides opportunities for many of its critics to do extremely useful

work.[21] Within this broad radical socialist perspective there are different views. For example, Yarnit[22] and Lovett[23] both give attention to the importance of content, curriculum, basic information and indeed instruction as against a concentration on method and a celebration of the direct experience of the student.

It is, therefore, surprising to find Jackson, a strong influence on this school, demonstrating a fair measure of agreement with Crombie on philosophy and on pedagogy.[24] Crombie's specific proposals, however, are criticised on the grounds that they stop short of their logical conclusion. Crombie and Harries-Jenkins are both criticised for mounting a 'trade unionist' defence of jobs in the universities.

Jackson claims that what Crombie wants is better achieved in new institutional networks 'of which the material base is often the more imaginative local authorities, than in traditional institutions of higher learning'.[25] This approach is echoed by others associated with UAE who question the relevance of higher education to the needs of the working class in terms of the supposed tensions between education for individual or collective advancement, education for 'getting in and getting on' and education for radical social change. This discussion has taken place particularly amongst those involved in 'Second Chance', 'New Horizons' and similar courses. It has found a much fainter echo with tutors who sometimes counterpose traditional, uncertificated, open-ended liberal adult education against a system of access courses, credit transfer and part-time degree provision.

There are problems with the argument that working-class education should be sited outside the university and the explicit assertion that its purpose should be the training of a Marxist cadre who will politically transform education:[26] In periods of social 'normality' the proponents of these views can end up selling short the very people they wish to help. This is because, taken to its logical conclusion, this emphasis gives up on a struggle to open up education which is actually taking place now, which has possibilities, which in the past has achieved, admittedly small, successes and which will continue to be conducted by working-class people whatever the views of committed educators. The 'withdrawal' position with its echoes of the National Council of Labour Colleges, to the degree it gains influence can only *take the pressure off* universities to change and weaken demands for greater access for working-class people, a more relevant curriculum and more effective learning methods. Such an

approach may strengthen existing patterns of inequality, turn valuable resources over to the middle-class, deny working-class people a valuable learning experience and strengthen the conservatism and elitism of the university. Ultimately, it perceives the universities in simplistic over-determined fashion as *purely* agencies for bourgeois control and assimilation. For despite its radical discourse, such a stance fails to grasp that 'the resistance to the expansion of higher education, particularly to increasing the access of the working class, reflects the defence of the privileges of the classes who presently dominate the control of production and appropriate the largest share of its product'.[27] Any coherent attack on political and economic privilege in our society requires an attempt to change the universities as well as other key institutions. The roots of this abstentionism lie in a failure to see the contradictions and the opportunities in the universities, the freedom still offered to staff and to students, certainly in comparison with other educational institutions. If adult education radicals survived the danger of being incorporated by a university education into the existing bourgeois structure why cannot others emulate them?

Tutors in UAE should obviously attempt to forge links with many of the initiatives coming from local authorities. The collaboration between such authorities and several UAE departments illustrates the fact that there is no need to evacuate the university to ensure that this work is fruitful.[28] There are clearly constraints on radical work within universities. It would be naive to suppose that no such restraints operated on those working directly for local authorities. We are now seeing the nationalisation of the polytechnics. One of the justifications of this is local authority 'interference'. But the further education sector as a whole is far more characterised by the dead hand of vocational utilitarianism than its higher education counterpart. To build an imaginative and enduring adult education we need to build on many fronts, in the local authorities, in the colleges of adult education, in the WEA, in Ruskin and the Northern College, in the trade unions and also in the universities. To exclude the latter would be sectarian in all senses of the word. It would be particularly mistaken at a time when specialist working-class education is marginal and insecure.[29]

There are other considerations. It is surely questionable for those who are themselves products of the groves of academe, who are, indeed, still enjoying its fruits, to advise working-class students that they should remain at their posts in the collective struggle in office, factory or dole queue excluded from the higher earnings, greater job security and higher

status a university education has given their tutors. In fact it can be downright undemocratic and workerist. There are, after all, struggles going on in education. Moreover this position betrays that cardinal principle of adult education: people are capable of making up their own minds. If tutors argue for a right to education then, whilst urging its exercise, they should leave the specific choice of provision to those intended to benefit from it. Similarly, in the universities we need both greater access to traditional extramural provision *and* greater access to qualification provision. We should advise and inform students of the alternatives but support them whatever their choice.

It is particularly surprising to find voices within this Marxist-influenced school supporting contextualism and 'progressivism' in learning methods. It was, after all, Gramsci, continually cited by the radicals, who powerfully criticised the 'progressivism' of his day and emphasised the need for the working class to be initiated into existing knowledge, to *critically* assimilate the dominant culture and to master the art of thinking.[30] And it was Lenin who insisted on the existence of the external world as a reality independent of human beings and who asserted that Marxism 'did not cast aside the valuable gains of the bourgeois epoch but on the contrary, assimilated and digested all that was valuable in more than 2,000 years of development of human thought or culture'.[31] It is difficult to believe that either would have embraced contextualism or a simplistic and fatalistic view of the university as incapable of producing any useful education for the working class.

The university, in the context of the project for changing the university, is still relevant to working-class concerns. In that context, the case of the critics is a mistaken one. We must agree with Crombie and Harries-Jenkins and other critics who have pointed up the opportunism, flabbiness and political paralysis of UAE. But we must also agree with Taylor and his colleagues who have delineated the enduring potential of the liberal tradition if revitalised and reapplied. As Professor Jennings argues, in the face of today's challenges rather than becoming redundant, 'adult education of the liberal kind becomes ever more relevant'.[32]

The challenge from without

What, then, of the challenge to 'adult education of the liberal kind' stimulated by a state obsessed with the need for industrial training. It is,

110

first of all, worth repeating that in the context of a close relationship to capitalist priorities, links between industrialists and universities in Britain are nothing new and that at times they have excited public interest and discussion. The traditional red-brick universities were built in intimate collaboration with local employers. The controversy surrounding Warwick University and the concept of the 'Business University', a decade and a half ago, will still be fresh in many memories, as will be more recent arguments about defence contracts.[33] In the USA, however, the market activities of universities have been far more extensive. Their powerful impact on the academic community as long ago as the 1950s and 60s was described by one observer as '. . . the single most powerful agent of change that we can find in the universities' long history . . . Professors and scholars were thrust into the unwanted position of entrepreneurs in incessant search for new sources of capital, of new revenue and taking the word in its larger sense, of profits'.[34] In Britain, however, the universities have not faced such intense pressures from the state to move them into the market on the lines pioneered in America. They are facing them now.

Secondly, in examining recent prescriptions for the active involvement of universities in economic reconstruction, it is important to note at the beginning the reification of recent discourse: there is, of course, no such thing as 'industry' or 'the economy', only plant, machinery, *people*, producing, managing, buying, selling, financing, people standing in different economic and social relationships to each other. Words such as 'industry' or 'the economy' may, however, serve to cloak or muffle real conflictual social and economic relationships between employers, employees, shareholders, consumers, government and so forth — groupings which in a 'mixed economy', based on capital accumulation and profitability, stand in antagonism to each other.

On being thoughtlessly partisan

An obvious danger with this evasive reification which peppers recent official prescriptions on education — as we have seen it is nothing new, simply more explicit and extended — is that it shields and facilitates a drift towards support for those who, for example, formally own and control 'industry' and who possess the power to implement strategies for industrial and educational change.

Support for the 'needs' of 'industry' or 'the economy' or even 'the labour movement' might involve uncritically embracing the goals of government against opposition, employers against employees, organisational controllers as against activists and labour elites against the rank and file. For example, we quoted earlier a university statement on change in extramural work which perceived the rationale for change in terms of the argument 'that the regional economy must move further towards a high technology base to survive, that it must be supported by a highly trained labour force constantly updated and, that it is the social duty of higher education to commit part of its resources to these ends'.[35] The problem here is that these ends may themselves be contentious. The 'regional economy' referred to, at the time of the statement, had just experienced the year-long miners' strike. This strike could be analysed as management, backed by the state, attempting to modernise the industry against the forcible opposition of a workforce which saw such modernisation as being carried out not only against their wishes but at their expense. The controversies concerning the relationship of academic research to the social, economic and industrial issues involved in the miners' strike illustrate the point.[36]

How are the universities to carry out their 'duty' to 'the regional economy'? By providing management with scientific, technological and economic know-how which will strengthen their ability to implement contentious strategies? By advising the workforce on ways and means of foiling such strategies? By attempting to place the problems under critically dispassionate scrutiny? In such situations structured by opposing interests knowledge in the widest sense, or the lack of it, may, over time, be expected to play an important role in power relationships. The strong danger with a market approach to knowledge is that it increases pressure on academics to support those with the greatest power and the greatest resources. Attempts to implement statements concerning the social duty of universities to support the transformation of their regional economy to a high-technology base might, all too easily, elide into what is, in practice, support for existing controllers of that economy and conflict with other groups who oppose their strategies. Technology may be taken as a brief example of what we are talking about.

The recent statements of the DES and the UGC, are permeated by the 'need' for technological change and the need for the workforce to 'adapt' to it. As Armstrong has recently reminded us, drawing on Illich, 'needs'

142

do not have an objective reality.[37] They are created or manufactured, interpreted or diagnosed according to subjective criteria and value judgments made by those who themselves represent certain interest groups. The value judgments embodied in the statements quoted above were not arrived at by, for example, researching the 'needs' of the workforce involved in the industries that make up the national or regional economy but by reading off the policies of government and employers. The 'needs-meeting ideology', rather than meeting the requirements of the majority of the producers in the economy, may answer the needs of the DES, the UGC and the universities for clientele, financial resources and influence. As McKnight argues, 'In a modernised society where the major business is service, the political reality is that the central "need" is an adequate income for professional services and the economic growth they portend'.[38]

In the kind of statements which justify the new direction for universities, scientific and technological change is seen as incontestably essential and desirable, something which must benefit 'the general good'. This underlying judgment is, however, open to question. For example, one recent researcher argues that far from being in the interest of everybody, new technology is being introduced as a weapon against labour, that 'Technology is at the very forefront of this strategy of increasing competition and restoring profitability and it is a major reason why unions and their "restrictive practices" must be broken since they represent at least potential obstacles to smooth and rapid adjustment'.[39] New information technology could, of course, play a valuable role in educational development. Yet researchers describe its implementation to establish greater surveillance over employees as part of the attempt by management to weaken the trade unions and re-establish control over the workforce.[40] In the coal industry it is argued by the author of several detailed studies that '. . . new technology is used to serve the objectives of the NCB alone'[41] by the exercise of management prerogative with employees denied the right to negotiate.

Many recent students argue that technology is not in itself neutral, nor is it simply a matter of its impact being determined in practice by social and political forces. Rather, research design and implementation are decisively moulded by the needs of capital. The development and introduction of specific new technologies are, today, ultimately related to political strategies pursued by government since 1979. Conflicts in

high-change industries like printing underline the point: technology is contested terrain. It will not do simply to characterise opposition to change as Luddite. It may be rational and justifiable. The progressive nature of new technology may not always be appreciated by those at the receiving end. Rhetoric about 'the need for technological change' can obscure reality and disguise the central issues involved.

We need to examine specific technological change in specific circumstances but we need to do so within an overall framework. For example, the introduction of new technology will, in many cases, be potentially beneficial in increasing efficiency. But the question of who controls such innovation and whose purposes it serves are quite crucial. Such control in today's society is almost always in the hands of capital and the introduction and operation of new technology is governed by capitalist criteria. Without more, other things being equal, employees are likely to suffer. This kind of starting point can help us to illuminate real social and economic process and come to a closer understanding of the conflicts that leap out at us daily from the press and television.

The task of the university teacher, in this context, the essence of liberal adult education is surely to lay these conflicts bare, to assess critically the questions involved, to leave the taking of a position and perhaps consequent course of action to the educated judgment of the students. Yet the DES view of continuing education as the servant of economic growth and the UGC's desire for continuing education to aid the creation of an adaptable workforce appears to make a partisan orientation inevitable. Research and education instrumentally and uncritically geared to the perceived needs of the capitalist enterprise will partake of propaganda.

In distinction to these views our job in our teaching is, surely, to stimulate the arguments and address the concepts and tools required for self-analysis and judgment, not to prescribe specific social purposes. Whether or not citizens should accept or obstruct and challenge social change is, for adult educators, a matter which cannot be assumed in advance. It requires educational probing so that the *alternatives* posed by various ideological perspectives *which must be left to our students to decide between* can be unmasked, scrutinised, assessed and, hopefully, judged in relation to a series of *alternative* courses of action. Within this framework the aspiration of liberal education has not been to help people to *adapt* to given imperatives generated by others. It has been, rather, to

114

stimulate amongst students action infused by educational experience to *control* social and economic forces.

Yet much recent writing about continuing education when examined from this standpoint is explicitly partisan and committed. One essay, for example, informs us that, 'from an economic point of view this lifelong process would produce a labour force prepared and able to accept change . . . A recurrent education system with this unified approach would help individuals cope with change . . .'[42] The argument here is resolved before it is opened. Education is seen as the handmaiden of particular strategies intended to produce a preassumed result, a pliant workforce socialised in the norms and practices of a given pre-ordained capitalist economic system and an eternal bourgeois culture. In other statements the potential of purposive action by citizens, so central to the liberal ethic, is seen as virtually non-existent by advocates of continuing education: we are apparently all the playthings of invincible economic process. Cataloguing recent social and economic development, one commentator observes 'it is not a question of whether these changes are desirable or otherwise (on some of them I am agnostic) rather it is that they are apparently inevitable . . . The argument for the philosophy of continuing education does not have its origin in the imperialistic or expansionist ambitions of the education service but in the dynamic of social change.'[43]

Again, this kind of functionalist, fatalist view is inherently supportive of particular kinds of change introduced by the controllers of industry in their own interest. It is essentially a call for continuing education to play a role in seeking consent and agreement to such contentious change. The liberal view that we should seek to stimulate an awareness of the issues involved in such change, the arguments surrounding it and the possibilities of acquiescing in it on the one hand, or opposing it and presenting alternatives to it, on the other, are absent or residual. These kind of statements clearly inhabit the propaganda/training paradigm urged on universities by the government when it opens its Green Paper with the bold directive 'Higher Education must contribute more effectively to the improvement of the economy'.[44]

The grave danger is that provision which answers this demand will cease to be liberating education and become training for political control and economic reproduction and that educators will become manipulative technicians of a fixed, if sometimes inexplicit, social order.

The uses of elision

These problems require explicit confrontation by all of those involved in adult and continuing education. They should neither be evaded nor glossed over by simplification or elision. It is argued for example that 'in a sense all forms of education are a means to an end. In one form or another they will all lead to the end of personal development, of an awareness of oneself or one's society.'[45] It is further claimed that 'we do not worry much about the distinction between education and training'. As the MSC remarked in a document on Training Access Points criteria 'seeking to draw a clear distinction between training and education and indeed between "vocational" and "continuing" education can be arbitrary and unhelpful ...'[46] Yet in reality there *are* different forms of education informed by different *interests* and different philosophies. There is not one unvariegated indiscrete *education*. Different forms of education *can* be means to different ends. The enduring reality of differences between training and education has recently attracted attention.[47] We *can* draw distinctions between the two. The MSC's insistence that this is 'unhelpful' invites the famous Mandy Rice-Davies retort 'They would say that, wouldn't they?' The philosophy of this body, after all, is that the purpose of adult training is 'to raise the productivity and improve the flexibility and motivation of the labour force; to enable Management and other employees to adjust quickly and effectively to new methods, processes, products, services and technologies'.[48] The requirements and wishes of students are absent from the MSC's anti-educational discourse. As one critic points out much MSC training is fundamentally not an educational form at all because its aim is precisely to block the development of elaborated knowledge orientations.[49] The MSC has sought to exclude 'political' discussion from the provision it sponsors, yet at the same time, to insist that what may just as validly be viewed as political discussion, 'enterprise studies' must be included in all courses.[50]

It would be wrong to assert that training aimed at inducting students into the efficient practice of skills and means, without interrogating ends which are implicitly accepted as given, *cannot* break the bounds of its initial format. It *is* clear, however, that if this slippage process occurs, it *will* be viewed as 'unhelpful' by those who designed the original course. Just as from an educational viewpoint it is ineffective and unsatisfactory for broader issues to be addressed only as a result of such slippage. When

the MSC, which is now 'invading the university campus', writes to providers stating that 'inclusion in the course of political and related activities could be regarded as a breach of your agreement with the MSC and could result in the immediate closure of your course',[51] it is drawing our attention to the difference between training and education and to the fact that in the universities we certainly should worry about the distinction.

We are not advocates of an abstract and arid academicism. Particularly in the context of increasing access to the universities we need to relate education to the practical activities of life. But we need to do this in a broad and critical fashion. Universities are *educational* bodies. The distinction surely is between for example a university law course which aims at probing critical open-ended analysis and attempts to relate the subject to its social background and the more direct 'What the law is' courses mounted for the Law Society examinations. And relating education to social and economic factors or the problems students will encounter in life means something very different from training students to increase productivity or accept new technology. It is quite simply *not* the job of the university to subordinate itself as the UGC has done to the view of the employers that 'education and training' is essentially characterised by the contribution it can make to the success of employers 'as one means of improving their competitiveness and productivity and as part of national economic recovery'.[52]

One receives some reassurance from the view that in mounting vocational courses universities will start from a concern for the long term development of the individual and give priority to 'learning how to learn' and insist on discipline based knowledge.[53] One means of ensuring that this *is* the approach implemented in relation to education and training is to stand aside from 'the insidious attempt by politicians and bureaucrats to amalgamate these words, to make them slide into each other, to make them referentially synonymous'.[54] Perhaps the conceptually distinct education and training should, in practice, be brought closer together. Such a project requires us to start from the real differences, not ignore or evade them. How is the marriage between the two to be achieved? On what specific basis is training to be integrated with education? For bodies like the MSC the uses of elision are clear: if 'education' denotes something superior to 'training' why not appropriate the first term into a portmanteau 'education and training'? The term education is used as a

117

stalking horse. It lulls the critical faculties, obfuscates crucial changes and facilitates the implantation of training in institutions dedicated to education. Education used in this way becomes simply a semantic instrument in the expansion of training and the decline of education. In today's climate it is essential for the universities to apply distinctions long recognised in educational theory to new developments rather than liquidating them into the view that everything that happens in the classroom, no matter how limited and externally controlled, is *education*. This latter approach can only obscure prevailing tendencies until perhaps it is too late.

Will PEVE and PICKUP work?

Further problems arise if we turn to attempts to implement official scenarios, attempts which illustrate more precisely the pitfalls involved. The projected partnership between industry and academy may be an uneasy and tense one. A recent analysis of continuing professional education comments, 'For employers time and money are strongly linked and to send a member of staff on a course to update or upgrade his/her knowledge implies a decision on the value of that training to the health of the business against the salary and overheads paid'. Education, if it is to be paid for by the employer, must be the sinews of profitability. It must be 'sharply targeted to the requirements of the business', courses should be short, have instant impact, use 'teaching methods which do not waste time'.[55] This confirms earlier analysis of employers' perceptions: '... courses shall partake of the nature of training and development rather than education because of the resources available ... [education] is seen to be too wide, too costly and not directly related to the job ... [training] is not a separate function but integral to the industrial and retailing process and as such is aimed at increasing productivity'. Of further interest to adult educators is the fact that requests for paid educational leave were granted 'only if they are in the interest of the firm'. Companies examined 'distrust courses leading to qualifications'.[56] Two recent surveys from the Institute of Personnel Management and from a university consortium reinforce this profile. Employers, they state, want work-based short courses, 'practical' rather than 'theoretical'. Where possible, courses should take place in the employees' own time, whilst

118

employers judged the success of the provision largely on the basis of the operational benefits to the organisation.[57]

In general, this approach can also apply to professional and public bodies: wider education, an attempt to develop beyond or be critical of internally established institutional objectives may be perceived as dysfunctional.[58] In the market the DES wishes to create, courses will be designed, as Moos has argued regarding the MSC, 'to present knowledge in a codified, a mechanical form, they do not encourage widening outlook . . . The MSC's control of what is taught and how is not nominal. Many colleges have stories of MSC funds being suddenly withdrawn because of ill-defined dissatisfaction'.[59]

Alternatively, as Castagnos and Echevin state of French continuing education, clients will refuse to place courses 'not specifically technical, with an organisation whose ideology does not align with theirs'.[60]

One or two small problems, from academic freedom to the question of the moulding of teaching, research and knowledge in the interests and image of the new paymasters, appear to have been overlooked in the rush of the universities to demonstrate responsiveness to 'national needs' and just as importantly generate income in speedy fashion. One might add to the agenda of concern the evidence that employers often do not know what their long term 'needs' *are* in the fields of retraining and updating, do not want to pay 'high costs' and are reluctant to provide paid leave.[61] Information about 'employers' attitudes to Open University study indicates that the majority do not feel that general education is their responsibility'.[62]

One university provides more specific evidence of this truth. It reports that only two out of twelve local education authorities in its catchment area were prepared to pay fees for students on its part-time degree programme, no matter how occupationally specific the courses were.[63]

This is hardly surprising. Despite the view of the government and many in the universities that big killings are in prospect, that the universities possess an expertise in education and training which entrepreneurs, after a little persuasion and skilful marketing, will be anxious to purchase, there is more than a little evidence to the contrary. For example, preliminary results from a recent survey carried out at Bath University and covering 2,500 companies show that employers are extremely reluctant to finance even directly functional management education. An estimated fifth of the country's largest employers provide no training

whatsoever in management skills. Company spending overall on such training amounted to around £600 a year in the early 1980s. One company chair was quoted as stating, 'In the highly competitive sphere in which we trade, time is not available for formal management training. Managers are paid to successfully manage and if that cannot be achieved then they must be replaced.'[64] These findings are consistent with a 1985 report, *Adult Training in Britain*, which showed that a quarter of a sample of 500 firms had provided no training during the previous twelve months and 69% of the employees of these organisations had had no training at all.[65]

Given this context, employers' opposition to resourcing *wider* provision with less obvious and direct benefits to the organisation appears logical. The view of the Confederation of British Industry appears to be that industrial finance should not be used to make up for educational deficits created by government cutbacks. 'Higher education', they believe, 'is the government's business.'[66] The Council for Higher Education and Industry established in 1985 with Jim Prior as chair felt some six months later that their ambitious hopes for new development could not be justified.[67] Warning voices counsel the universities not to expect too much from new links with industry. Judging by the US experience, 'If universities really want to make money they should concentrate on racehorses not research'.[68] Others, however, argue that the developed inter-penetration between academy and business in the USA was vital and successful.[69]

At a deeper level there is no consensus on the impact of higher education on economics. On two facing pages of one issue of *The Times Higher Education Supplement* the Vice-Chancellor of York University was quoted as claiming that 'Universities have had little direct influence on the economic life of Britain and are not to blame for the failures of British industry ... there was no correlation between educational experience and economic growth'. While opposite, the Principal of Glasgow University asserted that 'The only hope for Britain's industrial future is an immediate reversal of the government's policy of higher education cuts'.[70] More detailed essays have left the exact relationship between education and the economic prosperity of capitalism undelineated and unresolved.[71] The cautious voice of the UCACE sounds a convincing note when it argues the necessity of recognising 'the complexity of the relationship between national economic performance and the shape of higher education; there is no conclusive evidence either

from this country or from our economic rivals to support the view that increased vocational academic specialism in the sciences and the technologies will lead to economic revival.'[72]

In this situation there is no guarantee that existing scenarios are rational or that they will be successful. Nonetheless, as we have seen, they are being pursued with vigour by government and universities.[73] They are strenuously attempting to change the attitude of both potential clients and potential teachers and researchers. Attitudes can be changed and perhaps the universities will be successful. But it is wise to consider the barriers to a major expansion and the dangers for the universities in the views and requirements of those who will pay for it.

The dangers for the universities

Nevertheless, in UAE we are already witnessing a limited growth of PEVE, a transfer of resources into vocationally-based continuing education and a related reduction of liberal adult education. If present trends continue and employer resistance *is* punctured, we shall see universities increasingly concerned with the former kind of provision, whilst the latter will constitute a residual high-cost sector not for those who necessarily 'need', 'demand' or 'want' it but for those who are willing and able to pay for it. Such developments, in all likelihood, will reinforce the socially regressive nature of the liberal 'leisure' sector. Certain sections of the middle class already socialised into higher education are more attracted to this provision, know what they want and have the wherewithal to pay for it. Continuing education will be skewed in the same direction. That the updating conception and the bent towards the professional leads, at least initially, to more education for the already educated, has long been observed. These trends will interact with the impact of the cuts, and the fee increases, which are already excluding the less well qualified potential students who tend to come from the working class, to intensify the elite nature of British universities.

But it is not simply a matter of access, important as this is. Working-class students *will* appear in this scenario on programmes sponsored by agencies of social concern, government bodies such as the MSC, and labour movement bodies. For a rounded picture we need to examine not only the question of access to university programmes but also the content and the approach of those programmes and ask: access to what kind of

education? As we approach the 1990s it seems, certainly if present trends continue, that the democratic dialogue, the critical probing method, the rigorous pursuit of the argument and the other qualities of liberal adult education, which will be ever more relevant, will be ever more challenged. The sponsors, given the attitude we have outlined, may well seek to tailor syllabus and methods to their own utilitarian concerns.

It is noteworthy in this context that while the recent manifestos from the DES, the NAB or the UGC, all urge widespread change in higher education, a qualitative increase in continuing education and a major transformation in terms of access, *not a single one of them* urges a legal right to paid educational leave. If PEL is largely a 'means' question, it takes us a little closer to the heart of the matter. If potential students do not have clear guaranteed legislative rights to choose courses to meet *their own* educational requirements and the *right* to paid leave to attend such courses, the matter remains one of *employer discretion*. As we have seen, the objectives of the majority of employers are far from educational. If individuals lack *legal* guaranteed educational rights, they will be under an obligation to employers who do them a favour by agreeing to release them and to pay them. In today's world 'there is no such thing as a free lunch'. The danger is that employers, in return for the favourable exercise of their discretion, will attempt to influence course curricula which could then come to embody the requirements of the sponsors not the students.

To see PEL solving all the problems is simplistic for two reasons. Of itself, such a right would not achieve too much. For example, as we have noted, many potential students, particularly from educationally deprived groups, are apathetic and cynical towards education. Others are socialised into thinking about education in narrowly instrumental terms. There would be a need for a new well-resourced education counselling service sited in working-class areas. There are, moreover, those in the universities quite prepared to accept curricula designed by sponsoring organisations on the basis of their self-interested diagnosis of students' needs. There is a mesh between certain components of university culture and the new utilitarianism. The *right to choose* would require articulation as one part of a wider programme and campaign to change educational institutions and embed education within popular consciousness.

In the absence of such an approach there is every likelihood that the syllabus of PEVE courses will increasingly be focused on the techniques

and skills required for externally set purposes rather than the tools and concepts citizens require to address issues, take educated action and control the society in which they live. If the new policies are successfully implemented, knowledge will increasingly become a commodity and the criterion for academic success will become profitability. There is, for example, good reason in terms of the new educational logic for a university facing cuts to urge an extramural department, which already generates one third of its finance, to increase that figure to 50% and then, perhaps even more. Yet the dependence on external organisations that such self-financing generates can lead to subservience, erosion of academic freedom and the shaping of research and teaching by the pound notes of those who have the resources to pay for it.

These points go unremarked by the DES and the UGC. Many in our field simply accept their analyses and recommendations, as one director of continuing education concludes, 'because we all know the essential, if exaggerated, truth of what has been said and we all know that we do need to face reality.'[74] If we are to face reality then we should make it explicit that the supporters of this strategy are 'urging in effect that an even greater proportion of scarce educational resources should be devoted to that small minority which has already benefited from tertiary education'[75] and that, for all the criticisms of education as an instrument of social engineering, the success of this strategy will engineer a small but important increment to social inequality. It will limit the autonomy of the university and move its teachers further in the direction of the US system: '"Scratch a faculty member today" observed one industrial vice-president "and you almost always find a businessman"'.[76]

If monopoly capitalism has long dreamt 'of a particular kind of specialised technician, identifiable by the co-existence in one and the same person of zest for his job and indifference to its purpose, professional enterprise and social submission, power and responsibility over technical questions and irresponsibility over questions of economic and social management',[77] so it has increasingly demanded a stratum of academic technicians who will justify existing power relations and theorise their maintenance. Existing policies, if successful, will strike a blow for this conception.

The much repeated call for the synthesis of training and education and vocationalism and liberalism is resolved in this discourse in favour of the first duality. The Liberal Tradition is weakened, but far from dead. It is

more important and more relevant than ever before. Yet present strategies *connive at* its demise. If successful they will strike at the heart of that tradition whose supporters aim through a very different marriage

> to assist in the birth among a group of people of those cultural and political and technical sensibilities which would make them members of a genuinely liberal public. This is at once a training in skills and an education in values. It includes a sort of therapy in the ancient sense of clarifying one's knowledge of one's self, it includes the imparting of all those skills of controversy with one's self which we call thinking; and with others which we call debate. And the end product of such liberal education of sensibilities is simply the self education, self cultivating man and woman.[78]

These are the values adult educators have to defend, the synthesis we must seek to achieve. And that requires, in the end, opposition to what is speedily becoming the conventional wisdom.

The organisational question

We have documented in some detail the way in which the traditional idea of a separate university department of adult education or extramural studies dedicated to the pursuit of liberal adult education, its staff partly financed by the state, has come under increasing threat. We have also raised questions as to whether this form of organisation, certainly as it developed in the post-war period, was *ever* adequate to answer the challenge of extending and deepening UAE. At a time when its very existence is threatened, it is important for those who see a continued relevance for UAE to explore some of the problems involved in the organisational form adopted for its prosecution. Has the grouping of special subject tutors with diverse responsibilities in a separate specialist department any continuing justification?

The role of the tutor

An examination of the literature over the last four decades discloses a certain shift in the view of the role and responsibilities of the extramural tutor. In the immediate post-war period, the most penetrating argument suggests the need to shield the full-time staff from the organisational and administrative duties which are seen as potentially eroding the time and

124

space required for the essential core activities of teaching and research. Raybould, that distinguished custodian of adult education values, saw these core activities themselves as more demanding for extramural than for internal staff.[79] He based the distinction on the nature of the students each taught. Whilst the scientific detached method, developing the art of thinking in the student, was essential to both internal and external staff, compared with degree students the clientele of adult education possessed a stronger possibility of measuring ideas against experience and translating the results into action. Because of the problem-centred approach of adult students there was a strong impetus in UAE towards interdisciplinary education. Because of the students' limited initial education, however, time was of the essence. There was a need, moreover, for closer attention to the techniques and disciplines of study. Because of this 'different methods of presentation and teaching are usually needed for adult and undergraduate students respectively'.[80] Whilst Raybould argued that extramural staff needed to be better teachers than internal lecturers, have sympathy with working-class students and strive to relate theory to practice, in his writings he gave little consideration to the details of an alternative methodology. Indeed, apart from his urging of the need to establish research into and teaching about the theory and organisation of adult education, there is clear continuity between the model of the adult teacher he offered and that embodied in the Oxford and Headlam and Hobhouse Reports. The former report sought to guard against the dangers of a tutor under the pressures of an appreciative and unacademic audience falling into 'slipshod and unacademic habits of thought and expression . . . dropping behind the work that is done in his subject and in short, from losing the scholar in the lecturer'[81] by prescribing regular internal teaching. Raybould, in contrast, felt specialisation was essential. A certain amount of internal work might be undertaken but the objective of maintaining university standards could be achieved through the tutor regularly discussing and planning the work with internal colleagues.

Nonetheless, Raybould stressed that the staff tutor was a scholar or he or she was nothing; he emphasised the need to undertake original research to the extent that he questioned the employment of non-university staff as part-time tutors. The focus on the teaching scholar required, as Harrison put it, that in the model extramural department,

> the burden of organising work which, in the past, had often interfered with the teaching and academic work of tutors was strictly limited . . . every

> facility and encouragement for research and writing was given ... every aspect of the work was argued and discussed providing an excellent introduction to the problems of adult education for the many young tutors who had but recently come into the work ... staff combined academic excellence with a sense of vocation for adult education.[82]

By the 1960s, however, there were warnings against pressures from the university on tutors to undertake organising and administrative work so that the full-time staff could not give adequate time to academic work. Despite the fact that universities such as Durham or Leeds excluded full-timers from organising duties, this burden grew. By that time less than one in three full-time tutors were free of organising responsibilities and at seven of the sixteen RB universities, no tutor was in that position.[83] A decade later almost all tutors were expected to undertake such duties. This was obviously the product of the changes in the pattern of work as the tutor devoting his or herself to two- or three-year tutorials over two terms with a limited amount of summer school work gave way to the tutor with an increasing involvement in courses for organisations and specialist groups. This work inevitably bred more administrative tasks and, given the tutors' educational involvement and the absence of expansion in administrative grades, this often fell to the tutor. These changes can be observed in the annual reports of Raybould's own department through the post-war decades.

The impact of changes from the 1940s and 50s to the 1960s and 70s on the staff tutor function can be gleaned from a more recent consideration of the role of full-time staff.[84] This added to the model of teacher and researcher liaising with full-time staff, an extended and full-blown organising role in finding and briefing part-time tutors and linking up with, according to subject specialism, training officers in industry or local government, education officers and staffs, the WEA, local societies, arts associations, and trade union officers. 'In dealing with this range of people he will need diplomatic skills that would have made for a successful career in the foreign service'.[85] Greater stress was now laid on adapting one's subject to the practical concerns of specialist groups 'not only in teaching but in writing so that the books that he will have found time to write will capture the interest of the layman'.[86] However, a sense of how far the scholar had moved into organising was provided by the comment on the new demands emanating from the state: 'The kinds of entrepreneurial work described in the [DES] discussion paper are, of

course, what many of the staff of extra-mural departments have been doing for many years'.[87]

A later examination provides an exhaustive description of existing expectations of the role of the tutor in UAE.[88] As well as carrying out to the full the role of university lecturers — teaching adults and carrying out research in their own academic discipline, attending faculty boards, university committees, examining, 'many do some undergraduate or postgraduate teaching'.[89] In addition, they are responsible for external liaison with educational and client organisations and internal liaison and collaboration with other departments and administrative units within the university. The job involves continuing examination of provision for the community in order to stop gaps, take advantage of opportunities, analyse demands and establish the organisational means to fulfil them. This is not simply an administrative but also a pedagogic task which 'may include the establishment of innovatory subject areas, multi-disciplinary approaches and the devising of new methods of teaching appropriate to particular adult groups'.[90] This in turn requires an intimate knowledge of the university as well as the community in order to make the former available to the latter. At one end of the scale it involves contact work with organisations; at the other, counselling of individual students on educational opportunities. This practice should be accompanied by research into the theory of adult education to identify and disseminate through publication and teaching what is specific in the teaching of adults. Extramural work, if it is to deliver provision of university standard, cannot be managed by pure administrators: to be at its best and most effective it demands 'that blend of research, teaching and organisation which is the hallmark of the full-time extra-mural lecturer'.[91]

This authoritative statement, the fruit of the labours of ten senior extramural staff from nine departments reaffirms the emphasis on the scholar, on work suitable to the university, and on adult education as a specialist area requiring specialist staff. These are themes to be found in Raybould's early elaborations. However, the role it requires of the UAE lecturer is a broader one than Raybould conceived of in the 1950s and contains functions that he questioned in the 1960s. Nonetheless, this statement appeared to reflect the realities of extramural work in the early 1980s.

However, by 1986, financial and organisational pressures whose effect 'may well be to emphasise the entrepreneurial developmental role of

academic staff' had led a number of directors to 'note with alarm that in present circumstances staff, however willing, are finding it difficult to fulfil three roles'.[92] The impact of the cuts and the new formula produced a further UCACE working party involving the HMIs. The eventual report suggested that there were no simple solutions. It emphasised the contractual identity of extramural and internal staff. Research could not be sacrificed: the advancement of knowledge and publication 'are not properly seen merely as required by the terms of appointment; they are a natural manifestation of an academic life'.[93] Similarly the working party 'would deplore any tendency for full-time staff to be so occupied by other responsibilities (which are bound to become more demanding as financial pressures increase) that their teaching role was seriously diminished'.[94] It was the job of the director to ensure that pressures for income generation did not de-academicise the tutor. Heads of department had a special responsibility to see 'that members of staff are not prevented from engaging in research by unreasonable expectations in regard to other responsibilities and are positively encouraged in their research activities'.[95]

This report was an articulate and cogent defence of the tripartite role. In the deteriorating conditions of the late 1980s such a defence might be seen as far more easily stated on paper than implemented in practice. Nonetheless discussion of the UCACE statements at at least one university concluded that '. . . most staff already undertake most, if not all, of the roles involved in these models and that the consequent "state of creative tension" had advantages in stimulation, as well as disadvantages in excessive workloads in some areas of the department.'[96]

A labour of Sisyphus?

However, it may be questioned whether excessive workloads make for efficient education and whether this model is the optimal one. To take one example, well represented in UAE, lecturers in industrial relations or more correctly industrial studies, may be expected to keep up with the state of the art in academic industrial relations, familiarising themselves with recent books and articles in the learned journals. But often their teaching to groups of trade unionists, management or professionals will require a greater input from economics or law than would be necessary on

an internal course. Moreover, a fair proportion of their work may involve a knowledge of what may be termed 'practical industrial relations', requiring a detailed knowledge of techniques from job evaluation to negotiating skills. Both of these dimensions, the multi-disciplinary and the practical, will apply to many extramural lecturers, whether in, for example, history, geography or the sciences. In many cases as well as giving extramural lecturers a more difficult brief than their internal colleagues, these additional responsibilities can militate against the sustained specialisation that moulds research in many academic disciplines and which it is possible to undertake internally. Further, the nature of acceptable publication is structured by the concerns of internal departments. There, what is seen as legitimate research tends to be directly linked, in perhaps the majority of cases, to the lecturer's teaching. The kind of publication arising from extramural teaching, often based on the synthesis, popularisation or operationalisation of original research, is sometimes viewed as less acceptable and, therefore, less helpful in career terms.

But the extramural lecturer is expected, in addition, to take an interest in teaching methods appropriate to adults. Indeed, this will be essential, given the variegated groups — contrasting with the relatively homogeneous internal student body — he or she will encounter. And the extramural lecturer will also be expected to have at least a nodding acquaintance with recent developments and controversies in the theory and organisation of adult education. Unlike internal lecturers they can expect their provision to be scrutinised, from time to time, by educational specialists from the DES. Compared with internal colleagues extramural teachers have a more direct retention problem: on many courses it is easier for their students to vote with their feet. Moreover, the days of minimal examining and marking for many tutors have long since departed, involved as they now are in a variety of certificate or diploma provision. So, too, are the days when class teaching ended at Easter. Indeed, with summer campus programmes added to summer schools, it can easily stretch into ten or eleven months of the year. And, of course, on top of all this may be a limited amount of internal teaching felt essential both to keep up with one's subject and for career progression, and undertaken, unlike extramural work by internal staff, for no payment.

It is reasonable to argue, particularly in the context of the resources available and the development of most extramural lecturers'

organisational and administrative responsibilities in the last two decades, that the amount of work involved here is too much for one person. That is, if it is to be performed effectively, if teaching is to be of a high standard, directly tailored to the students' needs, if there is to be enough of it to meet the ESH requirements, if articles and books to the standard of those produced in internal departments and, as is increasingly demanded, reflecting the concerns of one's discipline, are to be published. It is also highly arguable that the different aspects of the work demanded by the multi-faceted role often do not sit happily together and that the tension between them is often far from creative. Successful research, for example, requires long, undisturbed periods for thinking, for worrying away at problems, for travel, interviews, discussion with colleagues in other educational institutions, attendance at conferences and sustained writing. As the day-to-day organising role has developed it has become increasingly difficult to secure these conditions.

Again, there is surely not the same relationship between teaching and research and organising as that which exists between the first two and what is increasingly termed the 'entrepreneurial role'. A good teacher does not necessarily make a good researcher but the two are, perhaps, interlinked in a way that the scholarly pursuits and organising work are not. This is surely true with the kind of organisational skills that are increasingly being demanded from lecturers. Good scholars will often make bad diplomats and worse entrepreneurs. Many who see themselves called to the scholarly vocation will see the cultivation of the techniques of the diplomat as antipathetic to what they are about. And they may see the need to bargain over the price of their product as corrosive of the values of their calling. We may find staff who excel in all three functions. We are more likely to find staff who are good at one, particularly in the present demanding environment.

Isolation, resources and excellence

The problems inherent in the tripartite role might at least be softened if the environment was highly resourced. In reality, the resources, from salaries and secretaries to buildings and time and back-up staff, have been diminishing as fast as administrative and organisational demands have been added to the tutors' load. Of course, in most departments there

were always administrative demands. Despite them, scholars in UAE produced a number of classics which from Tawney's *Agrarian Revolution in the Sixteenth Century* to Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* specifically acknowledged debts to tutorial class students. Moreover, the writings of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, as well as the development of a range of provision from local history to social work education and industrial studies, illustrated the potential of UAE for fruitfully fusing theory and practice and for utilising an interdisciplinary approach to illuminate new problems. But the period prior to the mid-1970s was far less demanding and more tranquil. If one could make disciplined use of the regime outlined, for example, by Williams, one could make an effective contribution because the organising function remained limited and controlled. The days of entrepreneurs and diplomats, at least for the majority of tutors, lay in the future.'[97]

Nonetheless, the terrain was pure but bleak '. . . pure because you were able to set your own questions, . . . bleak because of the relative lack of intellectual exchange with colleagues'.[98] A further problem with the extramural form is that it has always represented an atomisation. Instead of a mini-department of economists, there were one, perhaps two, economists. Instead of a mini-department of philosophy, one, maybe two, philosophers. Even when many tutors ceased to have area responsibilities and 'live in the sticks', this fragmentation could make for intellectual isolation, particularly as directors who lacked the background to relate to staff through their various disciplines tended to emphasise even more their natural concern with 'the programme'. Some, like Raybould, consciously and coherently attempted to control drift. Others were increasingly satisfied with their tutors' annual completion of a satisfactory programme. But the limited resources which decreed that in most departments a handful of tutors handled the programme for extensive subject areas, also constrained the development of that programme. Sometimes, departments did build up teams to develop certain areas. This was, however, at the expense of appointments and work in other areas. Yet the opportunities that existed, particularly in the field of working-class education, often required economies of scale, *teams of specialists*, not the isolated, microcosmic, one or two tutors. In most cases where the latter model pertained opportunities were lost, opportunities which in the case of, say, trade union education were never to come again.

As the pressures for provision from the numerically small band of extramural brethren intensified, research and the essential time for thinking and educational exchange was often further minimised. By the 1980s many departments found themselves at a great distance from the Raybouldian model. Whilst departments differed, tutors could report that, as pressures for more courses escalated, they were never questioned about their research by heads of department, let alone encouraged to pursue it or make time for its completion. Others were informed that secretarial time could not be taken up with typing research papers and that publication of research was a private matter not a requirement of a university lectureship.

Questions were also being raised about the quality of extramural teaching. It was stated that 'Her Majesty's Inspectorate regarded the level of education offered in some areas as being extremely low, with too little demanded of students and not enough subject knowledge displayed by the tutor'.[99] The report of an inspection of one department argued that there was a lack of coherence in the programme as a whole; that there was little progression between different parts of the programme; that there was a need for a more 'systematic and professional approach' to the community's educational requirements; that opportunities to explore relationships between subject areas were underdeveloped; that there were no clear objectives involved in many courses. Also of particular concern to the HMIs was the lack of liaison between different full-time tutors and between full-time and part-time staff. The use of teaching aids was limited, students were often passive and were rarely required to produce written work or pursue other assignments between meetings.[100]

These comments may be partial and exaggerated. They certainly do not apply to a great deal of extramural work. Yet, few can be unaware of growing problems. These have less to do with the calibre of staff than the deteriorating situation which has placed tremendous demands on what was always an inadequate means for bringing the university to the community. In the ultimate, the problem is not one of form but one of resources. But the two are interlinked. The Raybould model faltered ultimately because of lack of recognition and resources. In 1962/3, the entire UAE service in England, Scotland and Wales was resourced by 279 staff tutors involved in mainstream work. By the turn of the decade there were 402 full-time teachers. This complement represented a tiny fraction of the total number of university lecturers. The increase was, in relation

to the expansion of internal staff in the same period, a derisory one.[101] It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that any perceptive outside observer would regard the university's attitude to adult education as grudging and its contribution as little more than a token.

This problem was, of course, compounded by the negligible contribution to adult education of the LEAs which Russell estimated at little more than one per cent of their overall expenditure. Most of this went on practical provision. The lack of support for liberal adult education in the LEAs often went hand in hand with elitism in the universities to minimise any joint agency provision which could perchance have garnered more resources. If UAE was thus marginalised, it was only one part of an ill-considered and ill-provided-for adult education.

The problem and today's solution

The problems that have occurred in UAE are, therefore, not the responsibility of its staff but of the state and the parent university. Had these partners been willing to create ten lecturers in economics, ten lecturers in history, ten lecturers in science and so on, with adequate buildings and an organisational and administrative apparatus, matters might have been very different. As it is, this brief review leads us to conclude that the historic organisation of UAE has been an inadequate and unsatisfactory one. As early as the 1950s there was criticism of both its relationship with external bodies, such as LEAs, as well as the voluntary groups and of its failure to achieve purchase on the internal university. It was clearly recognised that a broader and bigger organisational base was required, that in striving for this UAE could act as an integrative focus for the different kinds of adult education but that the university constituted a barrier to essential developments.[102]

The most pervasive argument for the marginality of UAE, for its lack of resources, for its limited horizons, has focused on its special funding by the DES and argued that this gave the work a protected nature, creating a divide which militated against acceptance of adult education as an intrinsic aspect of the universities' activity.[103] However, it would appear that rather than creating a division, separate funding simply reaffirmed and acted as justification for a division between normal university functions and UAE which *already existed* in the minds of university

hierarchies and indeed a majority of their staff. It was, moreover, not simply separate funding but, to some extent, the separate existence of the small scale extramural departments themselves, as Tawney noted,[104] which allowed universities to avoid more extensive responsibilities to the community. University leaders could point out that something was being done: UAE was the job of the extramural department separately funded by the state, not the job of the rest of the university. Demands for deeper involvement of the internal university were deflected as 'attention concentrated on developing an extra-mural form of further and higher education regarded as complete in itself'.[105]

Since the war there have been many who have argued that the only way that UAE could overcome its crippling marginality was by terminating special funding so that the total responsibility for resources would lie with the universities. In the abstract, there can be little doubt of the strength of this argument. The problem was that if implemented it would have represented a *declaration* that adult education was the responsibility of the university. But it would not, of itself, have made adult education a university responsibility. At least not to the degree that the universities would have been prepared to place equal, still less greater resources at its disposal than those foregone by severing the link with the Ministry. The majority view through the years that 'we are not convinced that in a time of financial stringency universities would regard adult education as no less important than research and undergraduate teaching'[106] was a diplomatic understatement which correctly located the problem, not in the secondary factor of funding but, primarily, in the dominant conceptions of university function and purpose held inside the academy and tolerated by the state.

The state is now, however, challenging that conception of purpose. It is now asserting that the university must be more responsive to 'social needs' and that adult education must form a core trinity with degree teaching and with research. The government's desire to break down the elitism and cloistered introversion of the ivory tower is a healthy one. However, as we have argued, 'social needs' boil down to making capitalism more efficient, more applied science and technology, more management education, more applied social studies and so forth. This strategy requires a particular kind of audience and a particular kind of education. The question of organisational form in UAE intertwines inextricably with concepts of curriculum, methodology and student body.

Structure is a function of purpose. The replacement of the all round tutor-organiser, custodian of the values of the liberal tradition by an entrepreneurial cadre, directly resourcing internal staff, is intimately related to changes in the education to be provided and in the student body. In this model UAE is finally fixed as a duopoly: a high cost liberal education for the middle classes and a much expanded provision for an already reasonably educated vocational audience, delivered largely by organisational bureaucracies. In this scenario for the qualitative extension of tendencies already well developed in UAE, the need for the scholar who sees adult education as a specialism evaporates.

Anybody from the internal staff can organise courses and teach adults — it is not *really* different from teaching undergraduates — or to be more precise *lecturing to* undergraduates. There is, therefore, little need for the historical extramural department. Harrison's academic excellence is still required. His sense of vocation for adult education is dissolved. Because the answer to the perennial problem of how to integrate adult education into the university is now resolved by the dissolution of historic adult education with a responsibility to the educationally underprivileged, to the liberal approach and to a creative participatory pedagogy. In as much as the new provision *is* different from mainstream university teaching, it requires an acquaintance with the training techniques of the business school or department of management studies, rather than with those of the traditional department of adult education. The end result of an acceptance of the DES's prescribed American model is a department of university extension standing as a private enterprise within the university. A dean of extension in the University of California comments,

> . . . my educational mission is to contribute to the larger teaching research and public service role of the university not to provide an educational alternative for adults . . . We've decided to go after an elite population our faculty can relate to.[107]

The stick for moving departments in this direction is, of course, the overall political–financial situation. The argument as we have documented it is that UAE must generate more and more income: there is no alternative. In this monetarist crusade the academic model is far from optimal. Despite the UCACE's spirited defence of this model, there are those in UAE who welcome or who are prepared to accept change in an entrepreneurial direction for a variety of reasons. We have

documented in some detail the tendencies pointing in this direction within post-war UAE. Today new carrots such as promotion of staff being related to 'development', ie profits are being dangled.

The end results are clear. A *small* number of *de-academicised* — they have little time for rigorous research, they do little teaching, they initiate and administrate such a variety of courses that they know a little bit about a lot of things but they cease to have any deep or up-to-date understanding of any specific discipline — *entrepreneurs* organise and resource provision for internal lecturers and part-time tutors to teach.

We have noted that several extramural departments have already moved significantly in this direction. Others are following. The process is often gradual, informal and insidious. The issues are often not confronted and argued through. Explicit declarations of a move to a new model are limited. Staff are simply encouraged to elevate income generation to the apex of their efforts. Teaching and research are played down. The more specific shape of university-wide developments remains difficult to predict. So much depends on the degree to which internal departments take up continuing education. Rhetoric about the elevation of continuing education to an equal place with research and degree teaching leaves a mountain to climb if that objective is to be realised. The problems are obvious ones. A recent report states

> Continuing education and training development no matter how necessary in order to bring our national professional commercial and industrial skills up-to-date is not seen as likely to help a (internal) department to survive and maintain adequate staffing for its current responsibilities in teaching and research. As long as undergraduate numbers and research contract income are the primary parameters governing the credibility of a department and research is seen to be the main factor in the promotion of individuals, there is no incentive for significant organised CET development no matter how desirable this may be.[108]

Nevertheless it is clear that a failure to create more resources and organisation for continuing education within internal departments leads many universities to place an even greater emphasis on a more productive entrepreneurial de-academicised UAE. In these circumstances it is clear that those who wish to see the universities serve more than 'an elite population' both inside and outside the walls must urge a greater involvement of internal university finance and resources, applied not only to PEVE and PICKUP but also to part-time degrees and crucially, here, to liberal adult education. This, in turn, requires us to defend the UAE

department as an academic body which like any other university department should be a centre of teaching and scholarship. But we must do this with a clear understanding that what they are defending, far from being perfect, embodied and embodies serious problems. In other words, it is simply not sufficient to defend the *status quo*. We must be aware of the historical inadequacy of the extra-mural form in terms of its marginalisation, its atomisation, isolation and lack of resources, its failure in breaking universities from their elitism and in delivering a sufficiently powerful adult education to its potential clientele. If, in defending the need for a body of adult education specialists, we look critically at the extramural departments they must not limit our horizons. We must increasingly focus on the university. That is where the power to influence decisions has always lain and we must take advantage of recent developments to think increasingly in university-wide terms. If UAE is to reverse the present disintegrative tendencies, it will have to settle accounts with its parent bodies.

5

The Future of University Adult Education

> Certain clear signals emerged from this conference. Continuing Education and Training is *here to stay*. The universities, as evidenced by the seniority of the conference delegates, are making a fundamental extension to their perceived responsibilities. There is no suggestion the liberal adult education provision should be reduced . . .
>
> Report on PICKUP in Universities National Conference, November 1986

> First it was Birkbeck now it is London University's Extra-mural Department that is under threat. The worst possible scenario is closure. That is highly speculative but firmly written into the budgets is a 10 per cent cut this year and a 75 per cent cut in UGC funding over the following three years.
>
> *Education Guardian*, November 4th, 1986

To recapitulate briefly: we have examined the changes in UAE over the past two decades setting them in their historical background and relating them to wider educational and political factors. In the last chapter we discussed in some detail the issues of philosophy, method and organisation which these developments have pushed to the fore. We concluded that what we are witnessing is the replacement of the traditional university approach to adult education by a narrower emphasis on training. This has been placed at the centre of the new continuing education because of the centrality successive governments, particularly since 1979, have given to the idea that education's basic purpose is to provide industry with adequately skilled labour and technological and scientific know-how.

In this context PEVE and PICKUP have attracted attention and resources at the expense of part-time degree provision, liberal adult education and work with the educationally disadvantaged. The continuing education that has developed in Britain in the 1980s is far removed from the integrated and diverse constellation of opportunities to study throughout life envisaged by proponents of lifelong and recurrent education.

These developments have been reflected in organisational change in the university. The reaction to political pressures to devote more university resources to professional, scientific and technological training

has led to the establishment of central arrangements for the provision of continuing education and a run down of extramural departments. The preferred model seems to be a small team of co-ordinators linking internal university resources with the needs for high level training imputed to industrial sponsors. The terrain of educational decision making and debate on UAE has progressively shifted from the UAE sector to the university and the state.

In this concluding section we turn to briefly examine the nature of the university as we approach the 1990s. We then scrutinise recent developments in the patterns of provision of UAE before suggesting changes which could go some way to facilitating a serious move by universities into a broader continuing education. Finally, proposals from the political parties and the 1987 White Paper are discussed. It is argued that unless the questions of resources and philosophy are explicitly addressed, talk of serious changes in university provision may remain exactly that. There will be more training and consultancy and more fund raising but no fundamental qualitative transformation. Assertion that continuing education is just as important as the education of 18–21-year-olds and academic research will require *a switch of resources* from those activities into the new field.

British universities today

The turmoil of the past twenty-five years, from Robbins to the UGC cuts, has wrought important changes in Britain's university system. It has left the essentials of that system surprisingly intact. In fact the series of reforms from the establishment of extramural departments to the creation of the polytechnic sector and the forging of the Open University, largely the product of demands that the universities should change, have taken the heat out of those demands and enabled the universities to continue much as before. The OU, for example, can be perceived as 'a token by which a highly selected elite system defends itself by accepting in principle the existence of a different kind of university'.[1] This is not to minimise the value of these reforms, simply to acknowledge their limitations — the majority of OU entrants, for example, have two 'A' levels or more. They did not succeed in creating an expanded system of higher education which serves *all* sections of society. The key fact is that they did not directly touch in transformative fashion the universities

which in diverse ways from their credentialling of recruitment to elite professions, to their domination of research and their influence on examinations, play an important role in structuring *all* education in Britain today.

The conservative resilience of the universities is striking. Access to higher education as a whole remains almost totally restricted to those who are successful in the specialised and academic 'A' level examination. The age participation rate — the number of entrants into higher education expressed as a proportion of the relevant 18 year old age group was, in the mid seventies, 43% in the USA, 39% in Japan, 28% in France and 21% in Great Britain. In international terms, the UK provides higher education for a relatively small number of students.[2] Entrance to British universities in comparison with other countries requires full-time study until the age of eighteen and then involves a further three years of intensive full-time work. Those who wish to study part-time and those who decide to enter university later in life have been minimally catered for.[3]

Participation in higher education, particularly in the universities, remains, moreover, powerfully structured by social class origin. By the end of the 1970s one estimate suggested that 70% of the students in universities were from the middle classes and only 20% from the working class — in the further education sector the figures were 64% and 26%.[4] Edwards argues that the proportion of working class students in the universities had fallen from 30% in 1970, to 23% a decade later.[5] It is claimed that if there is no change in university entrance requirements the number of working-class entrants will be reduced through the 'squeezing out' process — working-class applicants tend to have inferior 'A' level qualifications to their middle class counterparts — from 18,000 in 1979, to less than 9,000 in 1990. Entrants from professional and managerial families will increase from 43,000 to 46,000.[6]

One recent survey concludes that in the 1980s, '. . . students entering university are drawn overwhelmingly from the higher occupational groups of this society . . . the relative chances of young people from different backgrounds gaining access have changed only slightly and then in favour of those groups already well off'.[7] Another detailed examination concludes that throughout this century changes in class inputs to universities have been minimal.[8]

The bias against older people and working-class people is replicated in relation to gender and ethnicity. Little and Robbins have pointed to the

exclusion of blacks from higher education'[9] and Spender and Farrant have noted the continuing bias against women, the latter arguing that the proportion of female entrants to university from working-class backgrounds has declined.[10] In the perpetuation of the conservative ivory tower, 'bias', as Tyrell Burgess has argued, 'is of the essence'.[11]

Restricted access is only the most obvious dimension of university conservatism. Despite the intensifying integration of universities with employers, highlighted by the existence of the national network of business schools, accusations against the Industrial Relations Research Unit at Warwick University of bias in favour of the trade unions could still produce widespread academic and political concern, culminating in an SSRC inquiry.[12] The hue and cry over peace studies has produced little comment on the relationship of British universities with the UK and US military establishment, most recently in the 'Star Wars' programme.[13] The knowledge produced and disseminated in the universities is shaped by the requirements of its patrons and the future needs of its clientele. It would be difficult to sustain the argument that trade unions or women's groups or black organisations receive access to university resources related to their relative weight in society, or that their problems or concerns, still less those of a mass social movement like CND are reflected in curriculum and research. The present faculty–subject divide imposed on learning is related to this, as is the arcane approach of the rigid lecture–seminar system. Those areas of the higher education system which have attempted to respond to the concerns of new approaches such as labour or local history, developments in educational technology and distance learning and the needs of environmental or minority groups stand out in an increasingly archaic landscape.

The university and the local community

UAE has, itself, been part of this problem. The token compromise by which extramural departments would serve the interests of those the university had excluded has not been honoured. The evidence that we have shows extramural provision following broadly the same contours as the internal university. This is hardly surprising, given the general view of extramural leaders since the 1940s and recently reiterated in a UCAE report that 'in a real sense the adult education arm of a university must be

that university in miniature'.[14] This view has increasingly inhibited UAE's initial mission to compensate for the inadequacies of the universities, not miniaturise those inadequacies and has led in practice to a reproduction of the parent bodies' distortion in relation to students and to subject areas.

UCACE statistics tend to give only a broad and sometimes inaccurate picture. However, a backward glance over the last decade strongly confirms the move away from the serious rigorous, lengthy provision aimed specifically at compensating for the educational deficiencies of working-class students. The most obvious measure is the continued erosion of the three year tutorial classes (see Table 3). These appear now to be in terminal decline. If one subtracts from the 1984/5 figure of 472 such courses, the 251 mounted by London and the twenty or thirty mounted by Leeds, Sheffield and Cardiff, there is precious little left. This decline, however, is only the sharp end of a continued move between 1975/6 and 1984/5 from longer to shorter provision reinforcing the trend of the 1960s.

Table 3 — *University Extra-Mural Courses — The Last Twenty-Five Years*

	1962/63	1968/69	1975/76	1984/85*	1985/86*
Three Year Courses	800	642	803	566	545
All Sessional and Tutorial Courses	2,708	3,569	3,654	3,529	3,324
Courses of 10–19 Meetings	1,288	1,702	2,255	3,312	3,472
Courses of 3–9 Meetings	977	1,536	2,141	2,880	3,196

* Refers only to courses involving non consecutive attendance.
Source: UCACE *Annual Reports*; R. Dyson, *Determining Priorities for University Extra-Mural Education*.

Table 4 — *University Extra-Mural Courses Involving Consecutive Attendance*

	1979/80	1984/85	1985/86
Courses of 15 Days and Over	124	130	119
Courses 8–14 Days	81	89	109
Courses 4–7 Days	643	827	869
Courses 2–3 Days	785	1,127	1,193
Courses 1 Day	752	1,334	1,352

Source: UCACE *Annual Reports*.

That trend traced by Dyson was itself simply a continuation of programme development in the 1940s and 1950s. From the end of the war to 1961/2 the number of three year courses rose by under 20%, the number of one year courses by 156% and the number of shorter courses by more than 250%. The figures for contact hours in 1984/5 confirm the pattern showing substantial decreases of 7.2% and 7.1% in both three year and sessional courses. The other side of the coin is the increase in the very short provision: the explosive growth of courses of 3–9 sessions in the 1960s and 1970s has been overshadowed by the phenomenon of even shorter one day schools whose numbers have almost doubled in the 1980s increasing by 17.7% in 1982/3 and by almost 19% in 1983/4. Such developments must raise once more concern about the quantity and quality of work students carry out on such courses and the recurring question: where is the distinctive nature of the university provision?

The emphasis on a more ephemeral, consumerist approach embodied in this pattern of provision is reflected in changes in the subject mix of the extramural programme (Tables 5 and 6). Here, again, the underlying tendencies noted by Dyson for the sixties and early seventies have continued with some modifications. In some ways, the rank order at the top represents a stronger entrenchment today than a decade ago for the 'participative' middle-class leisure subjects. Social Studies has fallen to fifth, whilst History, English Language and Literature, the Visual Arts, Modern Languages and Literature and Music have all moved up the table, Archaeology dropping only one place. The apparent stability and protected nature of the place in the sun these subjects gained at the expense of the more working-class oriented social and political provision of the immediate post-war period is illustrated by the fact that the existing top ten remains the same as three years ago — only the positions have changed.

Nonetheless, new pressures are being felt. Mathematics and Computing, having entered at No. 10 in 1982/3, advanced to ninth the following year and eighth on the current chart, the growth reflecting to some degree the strength of short instrumental provision. In 1982/3, Management Studies and Town and Country Planning entered the picture, registering increases of 40% and 28%. The push to professional courses was witnessed by a no doubt exaggerated 86% increase under the Education heading. Engineering and Technology now appear in the listings. But

Table 5 — *The Number of Adult Courses provided by Universities represented within the UCACE by subject group, 1962/63–1985/86*

	1962/63	1968/69	1975/76	1984/85	1985/86
Adult Education				127	138
Education				347	388
Archaeology	219	432	724	717	688
Celtic Studies	36	70	190	277	298
History	647	759	1036	1340	1442
Geography	142	179	167	197	205
International Relations etc.	355	232	169	148	171
Sociology/Social Studies	965	910	1058	782	862
Economics/Industrial Relations		624	533		
Economics				110	110
Management Studies				118	132
Industrial Studies				358	378
Law	61	115	192	346	362
Psychology	246	437	396	516	540
Philosophy	185	197	227	256	230
Religion	250	318	334	363	239
Physical Sciences	298	418	539	711	695
Biological Sciences	379	521	765	755	833
Other Sciences (Maths and Computing)	68	281	260	575	560
English Language and Literature	556	711	893	1139	1177
Ancient Language and Literature	41	37	37	65	75
Modern Language and Literature	233	302	276	521	573
Music	392	467	577	787	750
Visual Arts	501	737	841	943	1012
Drama/Film Studies				146	181
Engineering				35	35
Technology				74	84

Source: UCAE, UCACE *Annual Reports*; R. Dyson, *Determining Priorities for University Extra-Mural Provision*.

courses in these areas together fail to account for one per cent of the total. Science subjects taken together, at nearly 16% of total programme provision appear to be answering the government's call. We must, however, look before we leap. It is a sobering tribute to the conservatism of extramural work to discover that as long ago as 1966/7 science subjects

Table 6 — *Extra-Mural Top Twenty*
Subject expressed as percentage of total provision

	1974/75		*1984/85*		*1985/86*	
1	Social Studies	11.19	History	10.80	History	11.04
2	History	11.17	English Lang. & Lit.	8.60	English Lang. & Lit.	8.63
3	English Lang. & Lit.	9.09	Visual Arts	7.40	Visual Arts	7.40
4	Visual Arts	8.19	Music	5.95	Social Studies	6.00
5	Biological Sciences	7.65	Social Studies	5.90	Music	5.50
6	Archaeology	7.11	Biological Sciences	5.71	Biological Sciences	5.09
7	Economics & Ind. Relations	6.44	Physical Sciences	5.67	Archaeology & Anc. History	5.05
8	Physical Sciences	6.11	Archaeology & Anc. History	5.42	Modern Lang. & Lit.	4.20
9	Music	5.90	Maths & Computing	4.35	Maths & Computing	4.11
10	Unclassified	4.46	Modern Lang. & Lit.	3.94	Psychology	3.96
11	Psychology	4.41	Psychology	3.90		
12	Religion	3.19 }	Unclassified	3.40	Unclassified	2.90
	Modern Lang. & Lit.	3.19 }				
13			Religion	2.74	Education	2.85
14	Other Science Subjects	2.36	Industrial Studies	2.71	Industrial Studies	2.77
15	Philosophy	2.22 {	Education	2.62	Law	2.66
			Law	2.62	Religion	2.49
16	International Relations	1.91				
17	Geography	1.82	Celtic Studies	2.09	Other Professional Studies	2.38
18	Law	1.72	Philosophy	1.94	Celtic Studies	2.19
19	Celtic Studies	1.52	Other Professional Studies	1.90	Philosophy	1.69
20	Ancient Lang. & Lit.	0.35	Town & Country Planning	1.82	Town & Country Planning	1.45

Source: UCACE Reports.

amounted to 14% of provision.[15] To the enduring stability of the participative leisure subjects and the sprouting of PEVE in the 1980s must be added a continuation of the move away from the WEA — joint provision is now well under 20% of the extramural programme compared with well over 40% in the early 1960s — and in 1984/5 a halt to overall growth. After an increase in the pattern of the previous years of almost 6% in the total extramural programme in 1983/4, overall growth was only 1% twelve months later.

UAE has remained like its parent a formation involving a small elite. Table 7 is taken from the most extensive survey conducted in recent times. The sample was too small for great significance to be attached to it. Nonetheless, it gives some support to other small scale surveys and to impressionistic evidence. It can be seen that classes organised and provided directly by universities in this sample drew 90% of their students from the A–B C1 social categories 'high class' and a tiny proportion from C2/D–E 'lower class'. The situation was not dramatically better in WEA provision or in LEA classes. In view of the trends traced in this essay one would expect the situation, if anything, to have worsened. A more recent survey which found that one in four extramural students possessed a degree and that only 29% lacked any formal qualification may on the latter point overestimate the position.[16]

Despite the role of UAE in allegedly bringing the benefits of advanced knowledge to wide sections of the community it has been estimated that only 16% of the population are involved in any post-school provision.[17]

Table 7 — *Social-class Composition of Enrolments in Adult Education*
Expressed as percentages within providing agencies

	LEAs		*Responsible Bodies*		
Social Class	Evening Institutes	Major Establishments	University	University/WEA	WEA
AB	13	20	39	30	29
C1	63	60	53	58	43
C2DE	24	20	8	12	28

Source: National Institute of Adult Education, *Adult Education: Adequacy of Provision*, 1970, p. 128. For a later confirmation of these trends in continuing education generally see ACACE, *Adults: Their Educational Experience and Needs*, 1982.

One extramural director many years ago wrote that '. . . university extramural work is developing into a public service provided for the benefit not of the educationally underprivileged section of the population but increasingly for those who have received the advantages of a full-time education . . . increasingly the emphasis is on the further education of the products of the grammar schools, technical colleges and universities'.[18] Today, that development has reached fruition.

What kind of change?

Against this background the case for change in the university sector as a whole is an overwhelming one. Change in UAE is in this context contingent and symbolic. But the attention now being devoted to UAE provides perhaps some potential for change here to act as a spearhead for wider action. The divorce between the university and the lives and work of the majority of Britain's citizens, its remoteness from their problems and concerns, has surely become unacceptable. There is nothing new about this. A similar case could have been justifiably argued at any time in the last twenty-five years. The indictment possesses particular force today in the context of the failure of the post-war expansion of the universities and the fact that political pressures on the universities are far greater than in 1960 or 1970. The *status quo* in higher education is unacceptable; on this, if on nothing else, all the political parties are in agreement although, naturally, their remedies differ.

But the real power of the case for change comes from the persistence of the social ills that the adult education movement and the movement for university reform were called into being to answer in a period of social change unparalleled this century.

Those in UAE two and half decades ago looking at the faltering of 'The Great Tradition' and searching for a new sense of mission noted fundamental changes between their world and the heroic past enumerating, in particular, the emergence of full employment, increased standards of living and a greater degree of equality. The limitations of what had been achieved were acknowledged. But reform was viewed as having decisively transformed Britain's economy and society. The growth of the Welfare State, the erosion of poverty, a growth of trade unionism and a more favourable balance of forces between capital and labour were all

seen as directing UAE away from its earlier concerns towards the task of critically examining and developing commercial mass culture.[19]

Every single one of these changes regarded as fundamental and enduring in the 1950s and 1960s has been reversed. The comments from that period on the unprecedented pace of social and technological change also appear to come from a distant, comfortable and slow moving world.[20] The 1980s have already witnessed the re-emergence of mass unemployment on the scale of the pre-war years; changes in the labour force, particularly those involving women and black workers, more transformative than any this century linked to technological changes which dwarf those of the 1950s; a growth of inequality with 8 million estimated as living below the social security poverty line; what is, perhaps, a final destruction of British manufacturing industry linked to a dissolution of traditional working-class communities; and a severe weakening of the trade union movement. The riots in the inner cities, the miners' strike, the Falklands War and the emergence of a three party system are only the most obvious symptoms of important upheavals taking place in British society. In the educational sphere, we must confront the failure of the post-war reforms, the 1944 Education Act, university expansion, the creation of the polytechnics and the Open University to make education more democratic and relevant to the whole community.

In the face of increased unemployment, violence, social conflict and economic decline, the case of the government and the DES that universities must go out into the world and make a contribution to social problems is unassailable. A conservative response is unacceptable.

One sometimes detects at least hints of retreat in some statements. There are, for example, defensive overtones in one authoritative voice:

> The search for truth was what the universities were concerned with not the training of managers or civil servants and we would not be able to get much benefit from that in the market place. That was the main or only thing that mattered at universities and if that was not consistent with continuing education then the universities should not pursue continuing education.[21]

There is, however, no necessary collision between truth and education for managers or civil servants. There may be in practice. But truth can be effectively pursued in the teaching of managers or civil servants if, as in the teaching of eighteen year old students, the right conditions are present.

The problem with the present strategies is that the right conditions are not present. The state's projected journey into society should still be supported. But we must combine firm support for the journey with energetic attempts to transform the itinerary. Universities must attempt to provide education and research which can illuminate and perhaps point to possible solutions to *a whole range of social problems* as they are perceived by *a whole range of social groups*. If the universities are not to turn more to the economic problems perceived by an elite then access must be widened beyond predominantly middle- and upper-class eighteen year olds and beyond managers and civil servants. The university walls must be demolished, but not simply to serve the interests of the outside world's powerholders and the already privileged. Unfortunately, that *is* the direction in which the newly emerging continuing education points. It can only produce a different brand of elitism. As such, it is an unsatisfactory strategy for the university and for its department of adult education.

In relation to access we must enter one caveat. We are not arguing for the liquidation of excellence, or saying that anybody should be able to enter every university course, or that the universities should devote themselves exclusively to the working class. A simplistic egalitarianism or workerism can in the end only be corrosive of true education. We are merely urging that existing criteria for exclusion are unjustifiable and must be revised.

We have argued that the question of who gets access to education is bound up with the question of what do they get access to? The drift of present policy is to subordinate the content and the quality of education to the external purpose of greater industrial efficiency and productivity. Education should not start from these purposes. Even if one accepts the desirability of an economic model of education its utilisation is plagued with problems; nobody quite seems to know what the impact of education on economic performance is or how it takes place. Evidence is sometimes adduced of a link between economic growth and higher education in the advanced nations.[22] Initially, the manpower planners identified education with the residual element in post-war growth that could not be related to increases in physical capital or the flow of labour time.[23] But the exponents of the 'human capital approach' have grave problems explaining the sluggishness of productivity growth during and after the years of educational expansion even if we accept long lags before increased

educational expenditure affects economic performance. It is possible that Britain's neglect of education taken along with numerous other factors has played a role in its economic decline. However, the specific linkage is unresolved.

The role that education can play in economic success or failure would seem to be severely contingent on wider political and social factors. The position of the underdeveloped countries in the world market, for example, dependent as it is on a predetermined economic specialisation, its maintenance underpinned by political power can be little changed by the production of more graduates. The same point is made by noting that at a time when the age participation rate in higher education in Britain was very low compared with its economic competitors, the rate of graduate employment reached three times the level of unemployment. If economists find tremendous difficulties in this area in establishing linkage, performance targets and success measures, many would still agree with the argument: 'What then has education — as a publicly provided good — to contribute to industry? There is a long standing view that the answer is "very little"'.[24]

A more balanced assessment would state 'something' but it would go on to assert unequivocally that all of this is at best secondary. Even if we *could* show that education *did* produce greater economic efficiency this should never be allowed to detract from its proper central purposes of developing the powers of the mind, advancing human knowledge and promoting a critical, cultured citizenry. Education must never become subordinated to the alleged needs of a particular system of economic and industrial organisation. When, in its recent White Paper, the Government argues that universities must 'foster the positive attitudes to enterprise which are crucial for both institutions and their students'[25] they are advocating such subordination. Not to put too fine a point on it what they are advocating is brainwashing not education. The inculcation of positive, or for that matter negative, attitudes to work, enterprise, the licensing laws or artificial insemination is not part of the province of universities.

In any society the education system has to perform a variety of roles. The education and the continuing education of scientists, technologists, managers and economists is essential to any society. But so too is the education of teachers, architects and social workers. It is also clear that such education should be related in part to the kind of practical work to be

undertaken. But its thrust requires a *critical* and *analytical* examination of the practice and values of these occupations. Society requires people who can think, who can think critically, who are adept at problem-solving at a general level, who have a critical knowledge of the organisation of our society and its history and culture. Any healthy society requires scientists, social workers, managers or economists who understand not merely the technical aspects of their profession but the *social meaning* of what they do. It requires scientists and managers who have a critical awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. And it requires citizens who understand their potential for social activity and social change and are confident in their ability to control and develop their own lives.

In other words, we are arguing for higher education to provide as broad and balanced a range of education as possible from the arts to technological subjects, from science to the humanities, but to make each area of provision as broad and as interlinked as possible. The teaching of scientific or technological subjects requires a genuine critical liberal format as much as the teaching of any other subject. That is what 'a university training' as distinct from 'vocational training' is all about. A central problem in today's educational politics is the deliberate confusion of these two quite different things. It is arguable that far too many scientists and technologists have never had an adequately critical social training. And despite the immense importance of this, their chances of getting it in today's increasingly instrumental higher education diminish by the minute. We have to reassert the necessity to start from the requirements of education not from the requirements of specific practical pay-off, either control of the money supply or, for that matter, the planning of a future revolution. University education may stimulate personal growth or different forms of social action. It may help students to acquire a superior job. A dedication to M3 or Bolshevism may be an indirect side effect. Its inspiration should never constitute the objective of higher education.

What concerns us is that just as the new continuing education is a blunt weapon for increasing access, so its emphasis on vocational training at the expense of other kinds of education can produce more conformist, less thoughtful, less socially responsible managers or scientists or trade unionists. By dominating resource allocation at the expense of liberal, open-ended, academically rigorous education, it can contribute to a less aware and critical population and, therefore, to a debilitated democracy.

If renovated elitism and vocational training are emphases in present strategies that require confrontation, a third is the stress on the market. Education as somebody once remarked is not a commodity like cabbages to be sold to the highest bidder. A policy which treats it as such not only stimulates elitism and training, it increases inequality, driving out provision for those who cannot pay the price.

Russell said of adult education 'It must be a public service drawing upon public funds. The needs are such as few of our citizens could meet by their own efforts and large sections of the population could not afford to meet them at full cost or through commercial provision. The service must be available to all according to need and interest and irrespective of means'.[26] The same reasoning should apply to higher education as a whole.

We have argued through this essay that adult educators must increasingly think in terms of higher education as a whole. UAE initially embodied a tradition of university extension and reform. Its whole history exemplified the fact that UAE is *dependent* on its parent body. Certainly today, the state's insistence that the education of adults should become a central function of the university provides UAE with great opportunities as well as grave dangers and emphasises again that the key loci of decision-making lie in the DES and the vice-chancellor's office, not in the extramural department. The cosy insulation the years of neglect and marginality gave UAE are gone forever. The future of the extramural department is essentially bound up with the kind of changes taking place in the whole function of the university. It is in the debate about those changes and that function that adult educators stand the only chance of revitalising and extending their still intensely relevant tradition. This debate on purpose and function is also increasingly a political debate. It is on the terrain of state and university that future struggles will take place. University adult educators, therefore, need to direct themselves not only to strategies to protect and develop their own provision — such specific strategies are essential — but also to issues of access, pedagogy and finance in relation to the parent body. In a very real sense UAE's future depends on democratising the university.

One sometimes detects a certain ambivalence in UAE towards proposals for the expansion of internal university education through an extended system of access facilitation, credit transfer and part-time degrees. This is, perhaps, understandable if such a development is to take place *at the expense* of liberal adult education. We have already criticised

152

arguments that extramural departments should attempt moves into this field, forsaking existing provision. But there is no need for this to happen and indeed across the universities little pressure for it to happen. If the attempt to open up the university requires a *political* fight to change the nature of the university, not into a Marxist monolith but into a genuinely *pluralist* institution, so does the struggle to maintain any meaningful UAE. Unless the universities and their present policies are changed liberal adult education will end up more marginal than ever before. On the other hand, an attempt to change the universities in terms of access to internal courses can dynamise the attempt to extend UAE. Whatever the truth of the battle of the projections of the future of the eighteen-year-old age group it is clear that we possess a golden opportunity to *redistribute the university*. UAE can be a beneficiary of such redistribution. A more democratic and responsible university catering in new ways in its qualification programmes for previously excluded sections of society could also, as part of the process of change, stimulate and interrelate with a large non-credential adult education programme. One of the most crucial canons in the adult education credo is the belief that the numbers involved in UAE have been a small fraction of those who might be involved were the proper resources and organisation provided and utilised with vigour and imagination.

The pool of potential students who can benefit from UAE courses alone is a large one. There are others who may go from UAE courses to qualification courses and then back to involvement with UAE. As long as UAE staff do not stand aloof from arguments about access and as long as they assert the specific case for UAE, there is no reason why more education for the presently deprived should not mean more education of all kinds. We have to think of UAE as an essential integrated part of a comprehensive university wide constellation of courses — qualification and non-qualification. That means seeing changes in all areas of provision as our interest and our concern. For if UAE is to overcome its present crisis then we need to change the university. And we need to change present policies for changing the university.

What kind of strategy?

It is useful to start from three basic principles. First, a strategy for the future of UAE cannot and should not be constructed outside the confines

153

of a broader strategy for the future of the universities. It requires its own specificity but it needs to be intimately related to other aspects of university reform. Secondly, the future of the universities cannot be considered in isolation from the future of higher education generally. Thirdly, there is a need to consider short term measures related to the present situation we find ourselves in. But this should not inhibit us from envisaging broad reforms for the future as long as we do not lose all purchase on reality. Immediate practicality should be tempered by vision and vice versa.

In this context adult educators need to think not only in terms of a comprehensive university provision but of a future comprehensive system of post-school education. The goal of lifelong education and the strategy of recurrent education have, in fact, as yet only produced a limited and conservative continuing education. The aspiration of radical supporters of this philosophy for a transformation of the entire educational spectrum, so that the expansion of recurrent opportunities later in life in turn changes what happens educationally in childhood, have not met with success. Neither have the more limited hopes of those who focused on a greater systematisation of post-school provision as a first step. In present circumstances the possibilities for any major planned integration are limited. Nonetheless, the ideas of lifelong/recurrent education, whatever one's view of their provenance and particular theorising and prescription, remain intensely relevant. They represent a framework in which adult educators can think beyond traditional adult education. And their emphasis on the necessity of thinking in terms of the whole education system and their insistence on the dynamic interrelationship of its particular sectors is an important one.[27]

The logic of change in the universities certainly requires the stimulation of related changes in other parts of the educational system. The argument that universities should recruit students from a wider social and ability range, studying a wider range of subjects, directs attention to 'A' level and GCSE examinations. Because of the hierarchical nature of British education any consideration of the universities must lead us to examine the schools. In this context discussion in university circles on the need for a major review of all education between the ages of 13 and 22 and the moves by the CVCP to hold such a review are important ones.[28] But there is a need to go further. Much of the literature seems to suggest that factors related to educational advantage, such as domestic background are at

their strongest prior to the age of 13, and that initial schooling is a major determinant in future educational and hence life chances.[29]

Similarly, discussion of a changed educational role for the universities almost automatically raises the question of the polytechnics. It suggests a closing of the divide between polytechnics and universities. It is perhaps premature to think of the ending of that division. There is a need certainly to think about bridging measures. For example, the establishment of a body with overall responsibility for higher education would help to overcome fragmentation and give a framework to greater collaboration. A transbinary standing committee on continuing education formed in the wake of the UGC and NAB reports and chaired by Lord Perry represents the first formal administrative spanning of the divide. A development of links is, in all probability, an essential precursor of final integration at this level. The development of embryonic systems of credit transfer *across institutions* combined with a modularisation of qualification programmes suggested as long ago as the Robbins Report, would provide another organic means of breaking down the boundaries. This is also a valuable means of increasing access to universities, particularly for mature students and for those who do not wish to study in a once and for all block of two or three years. The Open College Scheme in Lancashire involving Nelson and Colne College and Lancaster University provides a useful example of collaboration across educational divisions which merits emulation elsewhere.[30]

The demand that already exists for greater access to universities can be seen from the fact that for every applicant to the OU there is at least one unsuccessful applicant and two additional written enquiries.[31] Applications for entry to the Joint Matriculation Board Universities, through the mature entry scheme for those who do not have 'A' levels or comparable qualifications, have more than doubled and the increase is greater than that amongst any other group seeking entry.[32] Whilst many of the surveys on the performance of mature students find the evidence inconclusive,[33] the most recent research concludes that

> Unqualified adults admitted through the mature entry scheme were found on average to do rather better than other university students in terms of the qualification achieved, especially in areas where experience plays an important part. Particularly in education and the social sciences and also law, mature entrants tended to come out on top.[34]

This gives support to those whose experience tells them that there is a large untapped pool of students who want university education and who can benefit from that education but who lack the formal qualification for entry. The significant expansion of access courses, particularly those aimed at women and ethnic minorities, is a healthy development.[35] We need more specifically tailored part-time degree courses to meet the special needs of mature students. But most of all we need to use recent research to overcome the strong reservations that exist in universities about the mature student without formal qualifications. The statement in the Green Paper that universities should be open to all who can benefit from them is hastily qualified by the statement that the benefit must justify the cost and worries about intellectual standards and the rigour of selection procedures.[36] If university recruitment is to be broken from the class based procedure of 'A' level results then the nettle of formal qualifications will have to be grasped.

If these innovations are important, what could be crucial in transforming the university is the emphasis now being laid on the so called 'third tier' of continuing education with opportunities for provision recurring throughout life. Its development provides an essential point of insertion for liberal adult educators. We have to argue, as suggested throughout this essay, that continuing education should not be simply professional and vocational education, still less professional and vocational training. This does not require, we have argued, that universities refuse to mount provision for managers or civil servants, nor refuse to relate such provision to the work and role concerns of such groupings. What it does require is for the University to insist that consideration of the mechanics of work roles does not negate examination of the broader issues involved in work, nor the wider social and political context which influences those roles. It also requires an insistence that continuing education must not only be open to professional groupings and to those who can afford to pay for it, but to trade unionists, to the unemployed, to women's groups, to black workers and to the educationally and socially deprived in general. This is far from the present purpose of the state and the university hierarchies.

UAE and the extramural departments

Yet the specific attacks on UAE as well as the fact that it suffers along with the rest of the university from the general state offensive combine

with its historical weaknesses to make an attempt at infusing the expansion of continuing education with the liberal spirit a difficult one. Even where extramural tutors are convinced, their numbers are small and getting smaller and they are already over-committed. Nonetheless, it would be tragic if existing tendencies come to fruition leaving a rump liberal sector as a slim adjunct to a vigorous PEVE based continuing education. The choice lies between the development of PEVE as the mainstream of university extension serving limited sections of society in a limited fashion or a *pluralistic* continuing education in which PEVE will be only one component integrated with adult education in an approach which can win greater resources than ever before for the education of *diverse* groups without sacrificing the best aspects of the traditions of scholarship and autonomy.

In our view this necessitates the rehabilitation and the flagging up of *working-class adult education*. It requires an understanding too that the term 'community' is an evasive one. 'Education for the community' can mean all things to all men and women. If universities are to serve their local communities in any halfway adequate fashion they must make conscious planned efforts with specifically earmarked resources and a carefully worked out approach to reach the majority of their community — the working class as we have broadly defined it. Working-class adult education, education for the majority of the community, education for those who most need it, requires just as much a specific and well resourced approach as PEVE. There is happily some recognition of this. Yet on the other hand there are universities which turn a blind eye to this and cater in their adult and continuing education as much as in their internal activities not for the community but for a privileged section of it the already educated.

It is of course value judgments about desirable ends which influence means. The predominant view in a university — whether conscious and articulated or semi-conscious and cloaked in rhetoric — on which sections of the community it should be educating and with what kind of education will have a strong influence on method and organisation. As we have seen, the work of many university adult education departments over the years became a pallid reflection of what happened inside the walls. The routinist programme was dominated by the educated middle class and the learning methods were all too often those which had educated that clientele in the first place. Any revitalisation has to accept the truth of

much of the criticism made over these years. But even in such departments there were exceptions and important exceptions.

The best examples of UAE have met the objective of catering for groups excluded from mainstream university education without sacrificing scholarship. They have been based, however, on a belief in the need to *adapt* scholarship. At its best UAE has differed from mainstream university education because it has taken account of the *specific* characteristics of adult learners and it has, therefore, prescribed *specific* learning methods. It has accepted that the discouraging experience of education as well as the rich experience of life of adult students has to be recognised. So has their standing as volunteers. It has, therefore, encouraged collective participation in the determination of what is to be learned and in ways of learning. There are important variations in both internal and external provision in universities and it would be as wrong to minimise pedagogic advances achieved internally as it would be to ignore deficiencies in UAE provision.

But often adult educators have involved themselves in trying to enter into the world of the community, the local group, the organisation they are working with, in order to understand the experience of participants and to diagnose together with those participants how university education can help. The class which emerges has, in turn, decided together immediate educational objectives. The endeavour then has been to provide the group with the tools they felt that they required through attempting to relate scholarship and specialist knowledge to their aspirations and experience. This has contrasted with the internal university's transmission approach embodied in lectures and seminars, as has the UAE pedagogy of study skills, discovery work, small group discussion, case-study work, role-play and self-directed learning. In other words, university adult educators have argued that their work has specific principles and a distinctive methodology.[37] Adult educators have argued against the idea that *anybody can do it* and asserted that the education of adults does *not* involve a simple flow of specialist knowledge from the University to external recipients but a struggle to find a 'way in' to that knowledge by the students, a struggle which can, in turn, transform that knowledge.

Provision on these lines has represented the distinctive contribution of the university to adult education. Where its striving for a dialectical relationship between scholarship and experience, between rigour and

158

relevance has been successful, it has unquestionably met the highest standards. However, there has always been a danger that 'university standards' which UAE must undoubtedly meet would become a received and frozen category by-passing the issues of educational disadvantage and life experience and based on emulation outside the walls of what was happening inside at a particular time. On the contrary, university standards cannot be acceptably defined as doing what the internal university does and doing it in the same way. What happened outside, if it was to be successful, had to be different from what happened inside. Rigour and quality, a dealing in advanced knowledge and its extension, can obviously be achieved by other means than the lecture and the seminar and the rigidly-drawn subject boundary. Yet, on the whole — there have been notable exceptions — UAE tutors who did not emulate internal teaching by inclination, as many did, felt pressure to do so. Williams, for example, records that:

> . . . all the time there was constant pressure from the University: you must improve academic standards, you must get written work, there must be no crossing of subject boundaries . . . My syllabuses were constantly criticised on these grounds: of course a class in English Literature but what is this other — including the first class in which I started discussing the themes of 'Culture and Society?' 'What sort of class is this?'[58]

The point is made: there must be leeway because in adult education there must be experimentation, there must be novelty, there must be adaptation, there must be development. Academic integrity can be sustained via a variety of approaches. The university must appoint staff equipped for the task. And it must trust them. If these fundamental assumptions, widely accepted in UAE, held good a decade ago then it is difficult to see how, in principle, they have been made redundant by the university cuts and the emergence of PEVE. Rather the re-emergence of economic, social and political problems requires that education based on this approach be given greater prominence and be extended to new groups as *a central part* of continuing education.

If this objective is to be argued for and to any degree implemented, a *sine qua non* is the necessity for a strong, aware core of specialist tutors committed not only to the liberal tradition but also to its implantation and cultivation within the developing continuing education. This, in turn, will require the building of close links with those appointed with purely PEVE and PICKUP briefs and close contact with those in internal departments

who are becoming involved in continuing education. If this essential specialist function is allowed to wither and the department of adult education is replaced by an administrative bureau, then this integration is unlikely to occur and we will certainly face the demise of the liberal tradition.

This is the problem with simply saying 'we must turn the resources of internal departments out towards the local community'. We must always ask *whom precisely we are turning to, for what purpose, and with what kind of education*. If the university *is* to serve all sectors of its local community it simply cannot do without a *specialist educational* body which can mediate between the university and trade unions; unemployed groups; black organisations; women's groups; historical and archaeological associations; employers and other diverse groups. It is in this context extramural educators must stake out their conceptions of continuing education, a continuing education which will be based on the revitalisation of the liberal tradition not on its liquidation. This is the danger of the entrepreneurial models which, seeing little need for personal growth, the development of social action or positive discrimination for the underprivileged see no need for any pedagogic interpolation between internal departments and already acculturated clients who simply require 'catalysts' and 'brokers' to match them up.

Nonetheless, the existing extramural form has itself been inadequate to the potential of UAE; today it is ever more so. There can surely be no going back to the under-resourced peripheral extramural department where increasingly in the 1960s and 1970s the demands placed on staff in terms of organisation, teaching and research made for inefficiency. In the mid-1980s extramural departments are not up to the job required of them. To overcome its problems UAE requires more tutors, more administrators with a knowledge of education, more backup staff. There will be a need for larger teams of tutors, researchers and administrators to work together and a degree of specialisation between the three functions interknit at the level of the project, the team and the department. This can work if there is a redefinition of UAE's purposes and of what adult education departments are about.

Over the last decades the majority of tutors have been appointed purely on the basis of their proficiency as subject specialists. This has been related to the development of specialist and educated audiences. These tutors could not be expected to have a sense or knowledge of adult

education on appointment and many were not inducted into its history and purposes. The withering of links between tutors in certain departments and the WEA is, perhaps, symbolised by the failure to find any replacement for the Association of Tutors in Adult Education. Instead, tutors tended to be involved in a variety of organisations and learned societies, discipline- rather than adult-education-based. Again, this process has been uneven. This is, perhaps, summed up by the fact that in one of the writers' departments every tutor and administrator receives a copy of the journal *Adult Education*. In the other even the library does not take it on the grounds that it is available elsewhere in the university.

The present situation in some universities emphasises the need not only for greater resources but for a change in educational direction. This is particularly urgent given today's challenges and possibilities. For example, the growth of voluntary organisations of the unemployed, blacks and women provides an opportunity for adult education to rediscover, at least to some degree, its earlier sense of itself as a movement not a consumption good. Those of us familiar with WEA branches providing limited programmes with limited numbers of ageing voluntary workers can be inspired by examples of vibrant branches relating to the concerns of community groups and succeeding in involving them in forging their own provision.[39] The changing class structure provides new opportunities. For example, if one of the small success stories of UAE in the past was the ability of its proponents to get inside the experience of the miners' communities and facilitate links between the NUM and the miners then in a different way the 1980s provide similar opportunities with a union such as NUPE.

Moreover, the discussion about continuing education provides an opportunity to argue against the passive, service 'delivery of provision' conception of education inherent in much official formulation and argue for the continued relevance of voluntaryism. If adult education is to be successful then as much as ever it requires the stimulation of self-organisation by the local community. The existing attention to continuing education also gives adult educators a forum to explain what they want to do and what they need to do it. It creates a platform on which to argue that valuable work will require patient, time consuming, pioneer work within the local community, to find out what is going on, to discuss conflicting views of what is going on and different conceptions of what education is required — a process very different, for example, from the

meeting between high ranking management and university personnel to decide for employees what their 'needs' are.

Of course this kind of valuable work is resource-intensive and brings us back to the central question of funding. If UAE is to become what it has never been, an intrinsic part of the university work then it is clear that the funding for UAE must become an intrinsic part of university funding. Moreover, UAE must be seen as a subsidised not as a self-financing sector. The opposing argument is that diverse funding for UAE reflects its diverse structure and that the DES component embodies the state's commitment to the community at large. DES funding is an essential protection for UAE. In a situation where the UGC is hopelessly and blindly infatuated with PEVE a move from dual to single resourcing would mean that liberal adult education would disappear without trace.[40] Perhaps the best view is that a change from DES to UGC funding, justified in principle, must take account of unpalatable reality and must be regarded as a long term objective, contingent on the progress of change within the universities. More immediately, adult educators must make every effort to argue against the anti-educational consequences of the DES formula even as revised and the lack of concern for quality embodied in the notion of 'Effective Student Hours'. Meanwhile, extra resources may be garnered from present upheavals within the university and the focus on continuing education. That is why adult educators must involve themselves in what is happening internally.

In this context there is a need to consider a series of possibilities relevant to the different positions of different extramural departments. For example, university adult educators may have to examine seriously proposals such as secondment or half-time posts in both extramural and the relevant internal department in order to ensure that a turning of the university outwards does, in fact, occur, that that turn outwards is an educational turn which widens the university audience, that still relevant liberal approaches sustain it and that adequate resources fuel it. Alternatively, financial arrangements could be developed to second interested internal staff on, say, a half-time basis for a year or two to develop particular areas of work. Of course the arteries are best stimulated from the heart. And such arrangements are best resourced from a powerful Institute or Centre for Adult and Continuing Education which subsumes existing extramural staff, those involved in PEVE projects and others who might be seconded or transferred from internal

departments. This appears preferable to the fragmented situation in some universities where the extramural department is separate from PEVE and part-time degree offices.

Such a centre would seek to develop *all* forms of adult and continuing education within the university whilst providing the unitary framework for cross-fertilisation and integration. It would commit itself to study and research in the teaching of adult and continuing education, seeking to link itself to every internal department as well as the external bodies in the field. It would provide a genuine test of the university's commitment to ensuring that adult and continuing education is as normal as research or degree teaching. It would, of course, represent a real beginning not an ending to the present chapter. For the challenges are numerous and difficult to overcome. It has been argued, for example, that if continuing education is to become intrinsic to the university

> . . . there must be an appreciation at all levels that continuing education and training is a legitimate role for a university lecturer deserving of significant commitment and so recognised in the assessment of an individual within a department, the assessment of a department within a university faculty . . . The system of incentives needs modification to favour CET.[41]

But this modification should not be seen in a narrow fashion. Nor should change be piecemeal and haphazard. If universities are serious about continuing education, its development will require not only a bigger resource base, it will require an *internal reallocation* of resources. There will be a need for some *transfer* of resources away from teaching 18–21 year olds towards continuing education even if additional finance is made available for the latter. Already over-deployed internal staff are not likely to take up continuing education on any large scale unless they are freed from other responsibilities. Fundamental change cannot be attained on the cheap. Perhaps a pound or two of increased productivity can be extracted from the existing workforce. Any significant progress in making continuing education a *major* university function will require more resources. If more resources are *not* forthcoming then in the universities as a whole continuing education will continue to be a matter of marginal importance.

The point about connecting with external bodies is also an important one. For university adult educators must look outwards as well as inwards. If universities are serious about serving their local communities rather than simply servicing their local captains of industry, then we have

argued they will give UAE a far higher profile than they have accorded it thus far. And they will give working-class adult education in the broadest sense a far higher profile. If universities are to reach the even sizeable minorities of the educationally deprived, then access provision will require extensive outreach and counselling work in the context of an advertising approach which relies on local radio and television far more than leaflets in libraries. This emphasis will, of course, require extensive resources. But if, as we are repeatedly informed, UAE *is* to have equal status within the university with degree work and to research then in all logic it should have *equal purchase upon university resources*.

Outreach work is essential. Those in universities coming into this area still talk as did many of their extramural predecessors of 'meeting demand'. This conception of a clear cut pre-existing 'demand' for courses is an intensely middle-class notion which has played its part in creating a middle-class clientele for UAE. The unemployed worker in the inner city is highly unlikely to be aware of his or her educational wants still less formulate or articulate them on the model of the doctor, lawyer or Indian chief from the leafy suburbs, and still less relate them to the different range of education available. Yet it is the latter middle-class model of educational awareness on which universities still largely operate. Advertise an evening class, dayschool, part-time degree. Publicise it in the right places and, hey presto, the punters will roll up. If only it were all so simple!

The missing link is *development work*. In reality educational needs and wants require stimulation and assessment through educational awareness campaigns and a dialogue between educator and potential student. Without campaigning and counselling, greater access will in all likelihood mean more for the middle class. Yet there are many in the universities who still fight shy of outreach and pre-course development work. It is, of course, much messier and more difficult than a half an hour discussion with a company training officer who knows exactly what 'his' employees need. But without it no community education worthy of the name will be possible. To be effective, access and outreach work require close collaboration between the university and a variety of educational voluntary and community organisations. Again elitism predisposes some in the universities to limit collaboration with, for example, local colleges. Again an effective contribution to the community demands such co-operation. There is no reason why Open College systems involving the

university and the further education bodies should not blossom in every locality. But, of course, in practice there are problems for which we need not look further than the responsible bodies themselves.

As long ago as the 1950s with the developing separation of the universities and the WEA and the entry of the local education authorities into the field of liberal adult education, complaints of duplication and of wasteful competition between the different bodies were rife. The voluminous evidence given to both Ashby and to Russell was replete with suggestions for rationalisation of the spheres of the different organisations. Indeed the former committee was said to have just stopped short of recommending the dissolution of the WEA. It was suggested, for example, that it should cease to provide grant-aided classes and should become a stimulator and organiser of demand for courses to be provided by the universities and the local education authorities.[42]

Today, the need for rationalisation in the adult education field and for a concentration of the forces of liberal adult education are more relevant than ever, given the greater resources, efficiency and economies of scale it could bring. It is, therefore, tempting to address once more the issue of a closer integration between the universities and the WEA. The last rites have been read over voluntaryism in each decade since the war. There can be little doubt that the WEA, like the other adult education bodies, has become professionalised. A basic problem in the last decade in some districts has been the development of a gulf between the professional staff concentrating on various priority area projects with the unemployed or ethnic minorities or involved in second chance work or trade union studies and the voluntary branches.[43] Attempts to bridge the gap for example by the establishment of industrial branches intended to bring students from the projects into the branch structure have not been successful overall. Weakened but not yet moribund, voluntaryism has limped along.

It would certainly be wrong to hasten the extinction of a voluntary organisation able even in the most limited fashion to voice the educational requirements of local communities and help to organise courses in a democratic fashion. Nonetheless, at a time of crisis it is essential that all those supportive of liberal adult education should stand together. As we have observed the 1980s have witnessed a new phase in the drifting apart of extramural departments and the WEA. At a time when both are facing what is essentially the same problem this fragmentation can only weaken

both. The WEA is a body with its own organisational ballast and interests which have to be respected. Despite a movement to greater national cohesion in the face of the new DES policies, its districts still possess great autonomy. Accepting this we would like to see a change of direction in adult education policy requiring greater collaboration between departments and the WEA. The WEA's professional resources, complementing those of the university, could provide an augmentation to a university Institute of Adult Education and avoid overlapping and duplication. A new marriage between universities and the WEA which joined the professionals together by, for example, attaching WEA tutor organisers to the universities, requires far more discussion but is surely worthy of consideration. We feel that it could only be consummated if it ensured the maintenance of the voluntary movement and the student-organised and controlled class.

More immediately, such official prescription on continuing education as the UGC report forcefully urges cross institutional co-operation, and the gauntlet has been picked up by the formation of bodies like Contact and the Coventry Consortium financed by PICKUP. The adult education institutions in contrast have tended to react to crises by ploughing their own furrow, a process to some degree induced by one of the numerous contradictions of state policy: the advocacy of co-operation within an imposed framework of competition. Greater collaboration between extramural departments in the same region would appear worthy of greater consideration than it has received. In Lancashire, for example, where one department possesses two industrial studies tutors and the other one, joint work with trade unions has been strengthened by more than numerical aggregation — by the specialised function — economics, law and history — each tutor is able to bring to the teamwork. Access work and distance learning would appear to be but two of the natural areas for collaboration. Such co-operation, moreover, can increase organically, from below, the sense of joint purpose required in UAE that a UCAE composed largely of senior personnel can never achieve in itself.

This is not to detract from the need outlined earlier for collaboration *across* sectors. In the context of the universities' historic move away from working-class adult education, the precedence given to PEVE the unhelpful and unnecessary fragmentation of work with working-class bodies and the challenges of access, it would be a step in the right direction if in every area an adult education development committee was

established. This would provide a forum for considering joint initiatives and minimising overlapping and competition. In particular, it could be given a special brief to examine proposals for an extension of working-class adult education and foster and co-ordinate their implementation. It would provide a means of focusing on the whole question of access and credit transfer but crucially it could provide a means of linking together liberal adult education undertaken with trade unions and community groups with access and part-time degree opportunities. Such a focus would go some way, at least, to redressing the present myopic concentration on industrial training.

None of this will be possible if adult educators shrink from taking up the central education arguments in their own institutions. In the universities this means a rejection of the repressive tolerance which is all too often the means of dealing with adult education.

'The Extra-mural Department is doing, and always has done, an excellent job in providing liberal adult education for the local community. It receives special funding from the DES to do this. We cannot, at the moment, offer further resources, particularly as the department is answering the imperatives to become self-financing. We, therefore, turn to the main point: the burning need to expand continuing education.' Discussion of fundamentals is often defused with an easy and apparent even-handedness: the extramural department must bear its share of economies with good humour and equanimity just like any other university department.

The extramural department is, of course, not like any other department. It is supposed to be the university's arm into the community, the bridge across which education passes into that community. One could, therefore, in all justice expect it to possess a special protected status at a time when universities are stating their great commitment to their local communities. The DES situation means, moreover, that the department is in double jeopardy when it comes to cuts. One could go on. But the point is clear. Unless the voice of UAE is firmly present at the internal table, the arguments and the decisions will go by default.

Proposals and politics

The possibilities of success for such scenarios will appear severely limited in many universities. An intelligent pessimism about prospects is

167

pertinent; it should not breed defeatism. The current is still running strongly in favour of the technocratisation of higher education. But within an oppressive landscape, a new attention to mature students' access courses, part-time education and the whole issue of disadvantage provides some relief. The issues in contention in the universities today are crucial ones. Their resolution even marginally in favour of genuine education, will require more than activity inside the university: external political action is ultimately necessary to change both policies and attitudes.

It is also incumbent on adult educators to develop political alternatives to the present devastation if we are to even hold the present line. Before turning to current proposals for development by the major political parties let us briefly mention two examples of this. Any efficient system of continuing education will require part-time study with employees leaving their job for short regular periods of, for example, day-release or longer block periods of six months, a year, or even longer. This is because in any expanded provision, all employees taking access, degree or liberal courses cannot be expected simply to leave their job, certainly not in today's economic conditions. And the difficulties of studying only in the evenings and at weekends combined with the problems of a normal job will deter thousands from re-entering education and severely limit the experience of thousands of those who are not so deterred.

A continuing education system which depends largely on this kind of study will be a *second-rate system* from the start. As with other areas of public provision, initial shoddy resourcing can later be utilised to discredit the whole concept.

Research and experience counsels against reliance for release from work for educational purposes on the goodwill of the employer. Opportunities for paid educational leave will be granted by welfarist or paternalist employers. The majority will refuse to allow release if the provision is not work-related and many will refuse release even if it is. It is unacceptable that educational opportunities should be distributed according to the vagaries of one's employment, employment many will have been consigned to in the first place because of limited educational attainment. In these circumstances the lack of educational *rights* simply reaffirms the inadequacies of initial schooling which continuing education should aim to redress. Of course opportunities for paid educational leave can be negotiated. One recent statement is relevant:

> We are aware for example of the recent one-year adult residential scholarships provided by Sheffield City Council and the two-year day-release courses organised for local authority employees by Derbyshire County Council in conjunction with the University of Nottingham. To leave this matter to the discretion of the employers, the attitude of trade unions and the unevenness and disparities between the different bargaining situations in which prospective students may be located is to leave many employees who are interested in more than ephemeral courses with little improvement upon the situation where they have to pursue their education in their own time.[44]

It would seem that paid educational leave is an absolute necessity for any *qualitative* stimulation of continuing education that is to progress beyond employer-sponsored industrial training. It is, therefore, little short of amazing that proposals for PEL are so conspicuous by their absence in statement after statement on continuing education. Perhaps in the context of the obsession with PEVE it is not so amazing. But if we are to turn the present tide of instrumentalism and employer dominance of provision we must look to the creation of a system of educational leave involving legal rights to grant or payment from the employer, and embracing a right to choose from the whole range of educational provision: degree courses, access courses, liberal adult education, political or trade union courses, whatever *the student* wishes to choose. The existence of such a right if accompanied by a campaign of education around it could go some distance to unfettering continuing education from the market, and from the training mould in which it is being presently cast.

Individuals would then have *the right to choose* their own provision for their own purposes, to stimulate personal development or enhance the effectiveness of social action. They would not be constrained, for example, by the necessities of organisational development or work efficiency. They would not have choices made for them. The introduction of such an entitlement could surely only stimulate liberal provision. Such proposals are far from utopian. Not only are they broadly embraced in the conventions of the International Labour Organisation, they have been introduced in other countries and have a great deal of support amongst educators and politicians in the UK. Whilst the comprehensive introduction of such rights may not be on the immediate agenda, the publicising of the idea of minimum educational grant entitlements can deepen interest and support. For as one advocate argues,

> There is no doubt that this country could afford the cost if it wanted to . . . We allow our governments to spend a greater percentage of GNP on defence than any other European nation while at the same time we turn a blind eye to the illegal refusal to pay taxes to the annual tune of £9,000 million. If we can afford these we can afford a minimum educational grant for adults. The campaign must seek to persuade people [it] is worth making a priority. It is a matter of choice.[45]

Turning to the micro level, one extramural department has made specific suggestions for changing the present constraints on UAE provision.[46] They assume that at least for the immediate future DES funding of the departments should continue. Any severing of the tie, given the present attitude within universities, would be likely to produce an accelerated immersion of staff in the professional and vocational pool. The principles of DES funding should, however, be replaced by alternative regulations. These would provide a basic core grant at level funding so that the departments would have the necessary professional establishment to undertake the task of providing liberal adult education, including access courses, given the extensive ground work such provision requires. This core grant for each responsible body would account for two-thirds of the DES funding. Grant should be related to success in attracting and keeping students but there should, given the existing pattern of university recruitment, be an element of positive discrimination and the ESH points awarded for relevant students should be particularly skewed towards those who left school at fifteen and other disadvantaged groups. Whilst responsible bodies should be encouraged to maximise their income, it would be recognised that extramural work is not readily susceptible to crude measures of cost effectiveness, particularly when it is attempting to redress the balance of social inequality. This modest proposal recognises the need for an increase in resources if UAE is to continue to function efficiently but takes cognisance of the unpropossessing political economic situation.

It therefore argues for a restoration of cuts on UAE and the WEA to the level of 1983/4 in real terms. The war of attrition on universities has been suspended but this truce has been made specifically dependent on continued collaboration with policies which are likely to damage UAE further.[47] Despite the revision of the DES regulations in March 1987, a revision which may constitute only a breathing space before the state march to payment by results is resumed, these alternative suggestions still merit discussion.

Obviously the success or otherwise of these kinds of proposals depends ultimately on a change in the political climate. The 1987 White Paper *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge* has been seen by some as representing some shift in the Conservative Party's attitude to higher education. Others traced its provenance to the wider field of electoral in-fighting. Certainly the framework of policy remains intact from previous prescription even if formulation is more muted. On the very first page under *Aims and Purposes* it is stated that 'Higher education should: serve the economy more effectively, pursue basic scientific research and scholarship in the arts and humanities; have closer links with industry and commerce, and promote enterprise'.[48] We are told that 'meeting the needs of the economy is not the sole purpose of higher education'[49] even if it remains the number one priority, whilst the Robbins Committee's multi-purpose definition is endorsed. 'The utilitarianism of the 1985 Green Paper is reaffirmed although in more considered language, that offers fewer honest hostages to critical fortune'.[50]

The Universities Funding Council which will replace the UGC will have broadly equal numbers of academic and non-academic members whilst the Secretary of State will have a reserve power to issue directions to the Council. The UFC will act to introduce competition between universities and operate on a basis of selectivity within the framework of education and research being relevant to the 'needs of the economy'. It will operate on the lines of a central bank. Universities will not receive their grants automatically but will have to *contract* with the council for specific funds. In assessing bids for funds the new central body will examine the degree to which the bids meet the needs of the economy and the university's general performance against a range of indicators of effectiveness. Serious failures to meet the terms of previous contracts will result in revised terms or a cut in funds to the recalcitrant university. The UFC would have unprecedented powers over universities to direct how allocated funds should be applied for particular purposes. The Croham Report's proposals for an 'overarching' body to plan across higher education are rejected. Of five paragraphs on continuing education, three deal with PEVE and PICKUP and only one — and an anodyne one at that — with 'other forms of adult higher education'. And the government reaffirms its determination to legislate on tenure and ensure the implementation of a range of 'value for money' managerial practices in the universities.

Thus far, the White Paper represents the mixture as before — only more so. As one supporter of its broad approach commented it will 'offend those who believe that higher education is in itself an essential concomitant of a civilised nation. Academic excellence does in the end depend upon the freedom of inquiring minds to follow wherever learning may take them. The government does not show sufficient awareness of this'.[51] But there *are* important changes. There is a greater formal acknowledgement of what the government practice had already exemplified: changes in provision cannot be left entirely to individual choice and the market — manpower planning receives a certain rehabilitation. Starting from the equivalent of 693,000 full-time students in higher education in 1985 the target for 1990 is revised upwards by around 4% to 726,000. A decline is then projected to 1996, in accordance with falling numbers of 18 year olds, before rising again to 723,000 in the year 2000 — a 14% increase on earlier planning. The merit of the White Paper is its refusal to accept that numbers in higher education should be related purely to demographic changes amongst teenagers. It goes on, however, to tie targeted number of places available in different subjects to the demands of employers and to achievement of a shift towards science; engineering; vocational courses; better 'value for money' by the educational bodies; and 'commitment by universities, polytechnics and colleges to opening up higher education to more mature entrants and to more who do not possess traditional entry qualifications'.[52]

This part of the Paper is like the curate's egg: the expansion of numbers is welcome. But the conditions under which it is to take place are highly questionable. Nonetheless, the emphasis on widening access is to be welcomed. Once an effective tin-opener is taken to the universities, who knows what the results will be, not least through the impact of the new students themselves? It is pointed out, for example, that

> not only will entry requirements and procedures have to be changed; institutions of higher education will have to adapt their teaching methods and the design of their courses to accommodate new types of student . . . increased participation in higher education need not be at the expense of academic excellence; indeed the stimulus of change should help to sharpen awareness of the different types of achievement that properly form part of the output of higher education.[53]

The White Paper goes on to urge universities to take in students with vocational qualifications such as the BTEC. It stresses the importance of

access courses and singles out those intended to provide entry to a range of institutions rather than to one receiving body. Validating bodies and the providers of access courses, it suggests, could look towards the establishment of a comprehensive framework for this work. With regard to criticism and concern over the admission of mature and unconventionally qualified students 'it sees no evidence in general that standards are impaired by the admission of students through this route: on the contrary the content and delivery of higher education courses which they attend, can benefit from their presence'.[54] However, attention is drawn to the importance of 'counselling students and supporting their motivation'.[55]

In a situation where more than 90% of university entrants have two 'A' levels or more, this gauntlet must be picked up. But it would not do to exaggerate the strength of this welcome light in the encircling gloom. For example, the Council for Industry and Education, made up of vice-chancellors and industrialists, described the White Paper's projections as too unambitious and 'a convenient ticket for limiting entry to what is still a quite small and privileged academic world'.[56] Extra resources, we must assume from the document's silence on this point, will not be provided to underpin projected expansion: it must be paid for by increased productivity.

This question of resources remains crucial. It is difficult to see any real progress unless *specific additional resources* are devoted to increasing access *and* unless specific resources are *transferred* from the present 'Big Two' of research and 18–21 teaching into continuing education. Yet in the same week that the White Paper was published a further blow was dealt to Birkbeck College which was informed by London University that its grant allocation for the coming year would be cut by £500,000. This again cruelly underlines the distinction between rhetoric and reality in the area of increasing access for mature students. A further example is the lack of attention paid to student support. In recent years, cut-backs in travel allowances, in the right to social security benefits in vocations, as well as limitations on housing benefits, have intensified the problems of the mature university entrant. The White Paper postpones decisions on student support to a wider review. But it states that the importance of maintaining access to higher education by students from all social and economic backgrounds will be given full weight in such a review. If 'for some higher education professionals Mr Baker's accouncement will be a

173

straw for a drowning man'[57] it is a straw that all those dedicated to university education, particularly UAE, must grasp at.

Labour and the Alliance both condemned these proposals on the same grounds as the Council for Industry and Education. There is too little and it is too late. What, then, of the proposals from the opposition parties which might hold out some prospect for future change? The Labour Party statement *Education Throughout Life* certainly offers much that is encouraging for adult educators. Its starting point is the need for a comprehensive system of education opportunities after eighteen. This will initially require 'repairing the severe damage inflicted by this government's cuts, widening access, diminishing educational inequalities and expanding higher education'.[58] The Labour Party points to a new partnership between itself, the academic community, industry and the trade unions as a means of progress.

It seeks to replace the UGC criteria of a higher education for those who can benefit from it, with the principles of provision available 'to those who wish to take courses designed to meet their needs'.[59] This, in relation to universities, does not simply mean, the statement argues, support for conventional degree courses. 'Part-time courses, non-degree work and continuing education as a whole must be given much higher status and a greater share of resources',[60] while there must be access for applicants without 'A' levels and for mature students. The decline in the 18 year old population, it is argued, is a golden opportunity to open the universities to a wider range of people, 'the forgotten majority'. The bias against women and the black community is particularly remarked. Continuing education must be made available to those without traditional qualifications. This would necessitate a significant increase in resources. Specifically, all adults who have had no education after eighteen would be entitled to the equivalent of one year's education backed by adequate financial support. Moreover, 'without a national presence continuing education will still be regarded as an afterthought. A development council for adult and continuing education must be established with status equivalent to a reformed NAB and the new Universities Council (which will replace the UGC)'.[61] Local authorities will be given a statutory duty to provide continuing education throughout their areas and they will be given sufficient resources to do the job properly. This, and much else in the statement, is stimulating. Whilst the consultative document's mode is broadly technocratic, its first listed aim for education contrasting with

recent official views is the promotion of 'personal development and self fulfilment within a broad educational experience',[62] whilst 'higher and continuing education must be aimed at meeting the needs of industry as well as society in general . . . it must avoid becoming narrowly vocational or job specific'.[63]

These are cheering sentiments and there are also some grounds for optimism in the recent SDP document, *More Means Better*. It, too, starts with the question of access. It urges an increase in the Age Participation rate to 20% by 1995 and a 30% increase in the number of students. It urges modularisation and credit transfer and a shift towards two-year general degrees or diplomas. The paper argues that full-time higher education should be funded on a fifty/fifty basis, half from block grant and half from fees, in order to produce a consumer led boom. Part-time higher education should be free for those undertaking first qualifications. Priority for expansion, it argues, 'should be given to part-time continuing education'.[64]

While the SDP proposals are less developed and detailed than those of Labour — they were severely criticised at the 1986 Party Conference for lacking integration and vision — there are problems with both sets of proposals. The Labour Party document, for example, has been criticised as 'often equivocal and sometimes its equivocations appear to be studied',[65] lacking philosophical depth and being vague about the changes required if its proposals are to be implemented. As usual, resources and time-scale will be key questions in any such implementation. Labour's senior economic spokesperson has told universities that they will have more money 'But it will not be all that you need even less all you ask for'.[66] It is of interest in the present climate that the proposal on educational entitlement is not costed and there are hints that it would be a long term commitment. However, the Shadow Chancellor has pledged himself to 'talk up' higher education and with other spokespersons has insisted that 'democratic change will be the price universities must pay for restoration of realistic funding'.[67]

If there is a glimmer of hope in the developing situation, we must not delude ourselves that a change in the political position would solve all our problems. However, it is increasingly clear that universities will have to *adapt* to existing political parameters or seek to *change them*. And the latter strategy will involve changing themselves. As one experienced observer remarks,

> real security of income can only be provided either by taking Mr Baker's (and Sir Keith's) advice and looking to other sources of cash apart from the state or by rebuilding the political case for more generous public support of higher education. The latter course would involve real reform to open up universities, not skilful packaging and presentation. Privatism or populism, that is the universities' ultimate choice.[65]

Initiatives of the kind we have discussed are invaluable in the here and now, both in adding weight to the cause of university reform and in stimulating resistance and challenge to dominant educational trends which have little to do with education but are rather prompted by partisan politics tricked out as economic necessity. Adult educators should certainly lend themselves to discussion and development of these kinds of proposals which could provide a spur for serious change in the university and a future stimulus for its adult education.

It certainly appears that without such a stimulus UAE may have little future. But there is a task of educational as well as political regeneration to be undertaken. More resources, which can only be produced by political action in the broad sense, are a *sine qua non* for a halt to the retreat. By themselves, they are inadequate. We need, in addition, a renewed and forceful acknowledgement that training is not education; that the fundamental purpose of education is not to provide employers with a supply of manpower tailored to their requirements, nor to inculcate in students the values of free enterprise; that the market is not a fit or efficient instrument for the distribution of educational opportunity; that educational deprivation remains an enduring reality; and that the university has a responsibility to serve the majority of its local community who suffer from educational disadvantage, rather than using its adult and continuing education as a fund-raising activity which largely serves the interests of a privileged minority. Too much ground has already been yielded. At this late hour only a return to fundamentals and a forthright reassertion of the case for education which is also, in essence, the case for adult education can stop the present rot and ensure that university adult education has a future.

Notes and references

1: The Great Tradition

1. The references are to Post-Experience Vocational Education, Professional, Industrial and Commercial Updating programmes; Continuing Education and Training; Continuing Education Record; and Universities' Statistical Record.

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4. Michael Sadler quoted in S. Rowbotham, op. cit., p. 64.

5. J. F. C. Harrison, op. cit., p. 240.

6. On this see R. Fieldhouse, *The Workers Educational Association: Aims and Achievements 1903–77*, Syracuse University, Publications in Continuing Education, 1977; B. Jennings, *Knowledge is Power: A Short History of the WEA 1903–78*, University of Hull, Department of Adult Education, 1979; J. F. C. Harrison, op. cit., chapter 7; T. Kelly, op. cit., chapter 15; B. Simon, op. cit., chapter 9.

7. A. Mansbridge, *An Adventure in Working Class Education* Longmans Green, 1920, p. xviii.

8. Cf. 'The logic of *Oxford and Working Class Education* was that the new forms of working class adult education were to be a means of maintaining, indeed strengthening, what fifty years later had been called "the establishment", rather than a significant agent of social change'. J. F. C. Harrison, op. cit., p. 268.

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10. *Oxford and Working Class Education*, p. 83.

11. Ibid, p. 48.

12. See, for example, P. Yorke, *Ruskin College 1899–1909*, Ruskin College Students Labour History Pamphlets, 1977; B. Jennings 'Revolting Students', *Studies in Adult Education*, Vol. 9, No. 1 1977, pp. 1–16; W. Craik, *Central Labour College 1909–29*, Lawrence and Wishart, 1964; J. P. M. Millar, *The Labour College Movement*, NCLC Publishing Co, 1979; J. Rée *Proletarian Philosophies*, Oxford University Press, 1984; J. McIlroy, 'Education for the Labour Movement: United Kingdom Experience Past and Present', *Labour Studies Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3, Winter 1980, pp. 198–213; A. Phillips and T. Putnam, 'Education for Emancipation', *Capital and Class*, 10 Spring 1980, pp. 18–42.

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26. S. McIntyre, *A Proletarian Science: Marxism in Britain, 1917–1933*, Lawrence and Wishart 1987; cf. G. Brown, 'Independence and Incorporation: the Labour College Movement and the WEA before the Second World War' in J. Thompson (ed.) *Adult Education For A Change*, Hutchinson, 1980. For the attitudes of students see W. Williams and A Heath, *Learn and Live*, Methuen, 1936.
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180

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5: The Future of University Adult Education

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215

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Index

Access to universities, 23, 57, 88, 154;
CVCP, study group on, 77;
and change in universities, 138;
and continuing education, 142;
and part-time degrees, 145;
and out-reachwork, 153;
and PEL, 157–8;
and 1987 White Paper, 161ff;
And, see CVCP; Working class students, Women; and Black Workers.
Adult Education, 13, 89, 150
Adult Education For a Change, 89
Advisory Council For Adult and Continuing Education (ACACE), v, 15, 24;
established, 44;
work of, 46ff;
demise of, 57ff;
Towards Continuing Education, 58;
Continuing Education: From Policies to Practice, 58
Althusser, L., 96
Armstrong, P. 101
Ashby Report on Adult Education, 154
Association For Recurrent Education, 37
Association of Tutors in Adult Education, 150
Baker, Kenneth, vi, 162, 165
Berrill, Sir Kenneth, 31
Birkbeck College, 75, 127, 162
Black workers, as underclass, 90;
exclusion from higher education, 130;
need for university to provide for, 149
British Coal, 90
Brunel University, 73
Burgess, Tyrell, 130
CND, 130
Callaghan, Jim, 45
Castagnos, J., 108
Central Labour College, 6
Centres of Adult and Continuing Education, 84, 151–2
Churchill, Sir W., 1, 12
Cole, G. D. H., 6, 9, 11
Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, vii, 31;
Working Party with UCAE, 32, 33, 41, 43, 57;
and increased access 77, 143;
and government, 80.
See also UCACE, UGC
Confederation of British Industry, 109
Conservative governments, 39, 50ff;
educational strategy of post 1979 administration, 50ff;
and universities, 52ff.
And see *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s*;
Higher Education: Meeting The Challenge; Education Bill 1987
Consortium For Advanced Continuing Education, (Contact), 71, 155
Continuing education, vii, viii, 3, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 28, 32, 33, 36;
related to Lifelong and Recurrent education, 37;
and universities, 42ff;
and Open University, 44;
and ACACE, 46ff, 57ff;
and UCACE in 80s, 60;
and DES, 61ff;
as an instrument of social control, 104ff;
as narrow professional and vocational training, 105ff;
problems of growth inside university, 125, 152;
need for breadth and balance, 140ff;
need for public subsidy for, 141;
as part of university reform, 142;
transbinary growth, 144;
and working class, 146;
pedagogy, 147ff;
and funding, 151;
and reallocation of resources from internal teaching, 152;
and the WEA, 153ff;
and PEL, 157ff;
and 1987 White Paper, 160ff.
And see Access; Liberal Adult Education; Extramural Departments; Part-time degrees; PEVE; UCACE; UGC
Council for Higher Education and Industry, 109, 162, 163
Council of Europe, 34
Coventry Consortium, 155
Credit Transfer, 144ff
Croham Report on UGC, 160
Crombie, A., 92ff, 97, 99
Curriculum of university adult education, 43 132ff
Department of Education and Science (DES), vi, vii, 16, 17, 19, 26, 39, 46, 47, 52, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 74, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 91, 92, 101, 102, 103, 108, 111, 112, 118, 124, 151, 155, 156, 159;
on education and social control, 51;
competition with MSC, 52, 59;
Continuing Education: Post Experience Vocational Provision for those in Employment, 60, 61ff, 69;

and PICKUP, 64;
UAE's response to, 69ff;
criticisms of UAE, 78;
possibilities for UAE within confines of DES philosophy, 79ff
DES Grant for Liberal Adult Education, 2;
Transfer to UGC, 30, 31, 62, 151;
reduction in, 63;
new formula for calculating, 68ff, 77;
transfer of Scottish funds to PICKUP, 71;
criticism of UAE in relation to, 78ff;
funding and universities neglect of adult and continuing education, 123;
proposals for revision of, 159.
And see, Continuing Education, Economic Ideology of Education; Liberal Adult Education, PEVE; UCACE; UGC.
Derbyshire County Council, 158
The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s, 1985 Green Paper, 70, 160
Dyson, R., 132
Echevin, C., 108
Economic Model of Education, 20ff;
Development of, 37ff;
DES acceptance of in continuing education, 61;
UGC's conversion to as philosophy for contuing education, 65ff;
response of UAE to, 69ff;
analysed in relation to continuing education, 99ff;
criticised, 137ff.
And see Conservative governments; Continuing Education; DES, PEVE; Liberal Adult Education, UCACE; UGC.
Education Act, 1944, 137
Education Bill, 1987, impact of on universities, vi–vii
Extramural Departments, inception, 7;
pressures to conform with internal University, 9;
Growth, 10, 12;
modern system, 11;
development of vocational courses in, 13;
and 1980s cuts, 15ff;
and future role, 18;
in the 60s, 25ff;
and industrial day-release, 26–7, 48–9;
differences between departments, 26ff;
and Russell, 28ff;
and CVCP, 31–33;
reaction to continuing education, 37;
reorganisation, 41ff;
reaction to Open University, 44;
and *Higher Education into the 1990s*, 46–7;
continued marginality, 47;
Programmes in the 70s, 48–9;
Reaction to 1979 government, 60ff;
pressures to become self-financing, 62;
and the new funding formula, 65ff;
changing forms of organisation in new universities, 73ff;
loss of staff, 74;
growth of PEVE in, 75;
weaknesses of extramural model, 120ff;
Lack of resources, 121–2;
marginality, elitism and separate funding of, 123–4;
use of as fundraiser for university and de-academicisation of staff, 125ff;
Length and content of courses, 131ff;
social class of students, 135;
need to turn into university, 141ff;
and Centres for Adult and Continuing Education, 151;
and need for more resources, 152ff
Extramural lectures, 1, 2;
pressures to conform to internal university, 9;
assimilation to internal status, 10;
professionalisation and appointment of subject specialists, 12;
marginality, 47;
reduction in numbers, 74;
changes in role, 113ff;
contradictions in role, 118ff;
need for specialist staff for UAE, 124ff, 149ff;
danger of de-academicisation, 125;
need to reassert teaching adults as a specialism, 146ff.
And see Continuing Education; DES; DES Grant, Liberal Adult Education; The Great Tradition; PEVE, UCACE; UGC; WEA, and working-class students
Falklands War, 137
Fordham, P., 17
France, Higher Education, 129
Germany, 38;
universities compared with UK, 38;
participation rates, 129
Gramsci, A., 96, 99
The Guardian, 127
HMIs, 78, 79, 117, 121
Hall, Stuart, 95
Harries-Jenkins, G., 87ff, 97, 99
Harrison, J., 114, 124
Hattersley, R., 164
Headlam-Hobhouse Report, 29, 114
Heath, Edward, 39
Heriot-Watt University, 73
Higher Education, Participation Rates in, 129
Higher Education Into the 1990s, 46

Higher Education: Meeting The Challenge, 1987 White Paper, vi, 128, 139;
analysed, 160ff
The Highway, 13, 89
Hoggart, Richard, 47, 120
Illich, I., 102
Inner-city riots, 137
Institute of Personnel Management, 107
International Labour Organisation, 158
Jackson, K., 97ff
Jarratt Report, 55
Jennings, B., 99
Joint Matriculation Board, 144
Joseph, Sir Keith, 165
Kerr, Clark, 28
Labour Governments, 39, 44, 45, 51
Labour Party, v, 5, 39, 59;
Education Throughout Life, 163ff
The Law Society, 106
Le Carre, John, 86
Lenin, V., 99
Liberal Adult Education, vii, 2, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23;
endangered by PEVE, 71;
contemporary relevance of, 87ff, 136ff;
distinguished from training, 100ff;
distinguished from PEVE, 112ff;
changes in Curriculum of, 130ff;
student body, 135;
as essentially central part of continuing education, 142ff;
and resources, 153.
And see Continuing Education; DES, DES Grant; Extramural Departments; Extramural Lectures; The Great Tradition; PEVE; UCACE; WEA; and working-class students
Lifelong Education, 14, 34, 35, 36;
related to Recurrent and Continuing Education, 37;
attention limited to continuing education, 50ff;
continued relevance of, 143.
See also Continuing Education, Paid Educational Leave
Little, A., 129
Local Authorities, 97;
and minimal contribution to continuing education, 122
Lovett, T., 97
McKnight, J., 102
Manpower planning, 20, 45, 56, 92, 138ff.
And see Economic Model of Education; PEVE; *Higher Education into the 1990s*
Manpower Services Commission (MSC), 39;
role of in 80s, 51–2, 59, 79, 91, 110;
and narrow training, 105–106;
MSC control and academic freedom, 108;
Adult Training in Britain, 109
Mansbridge, Albert, iii, 5, 59
Marxism, 6, 7, 10, 55, 96, 97, 99, 142
Mathias, H., 50
Milton, John, 86
Miners' Strike, 1984–5, 101
Moos, M., 108
National Advisory Body, 111, 144, 163
National Coal Board, 102
National Council of Labour Colleges, 6, 10, 97
National Institute of Adult Education, 33
National Union of Mineworkers, 80, 150
National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), 150
Nelson and Colne College, 144
'New Horizons Courses', 97
Northern College, 98
Open College Schemes, 144, 153
Open University, founded, 39, 137;
and continuing education, 44;
and alleged Marxism, 55;
degrees, 75;
as a token, 128;
applications to, 144
Organisation For Economic Co-operation and Development, 34
Outreach work, 153
Owens College, 3
Oxford and Working Class Education (the 1908 Report), 1, 5, 6, 17, 114
Paid Educational Leave (PEL), 111, 112;
need for, 157, 158
Palme, Olaf, 34
Part-time degrees, 13, 23, 46, 57, 75, 76, 127, 145, 152.
And see Access and Continuing Education
Pedagogy in adult and continuing education, 147–8
Perry, Lord, 144
Polytechnics, 39, 52, 128, 137
Post Experience Vocational Education (PEVE), 2, 28, 42, 43, 44, 50, 61ff, 64, 70, 75, 77, 82, 83, 84, 88, 110, 111, 125, 127, 135, 148, 154;
growth of in universities, 72, 75;
questioned, 107ff;
demand for, 108–109;
contrasted with liberal education, 112–113;
crowding out other forms of continuing education, 146;
and UGC, 151;
and 1987;
White paper, 160.
And see Professional and vocational courses and PICKUP.
Prior, J., 109

Professional Industrial Commercial Updating (PICKUP), 2, 16, 64, 71, 83, 84, 125, 127, 148, 155;
questioned, 107ff;
national conference on, 127;
and 1987 White Paper, 160.
And see DES; Professional and Vocational courses; PEVE
Professional and Vocational courses, 2, 11, 12, 16, 17;
Growth in 60s, 28, 32, 40, 41, 45, 57, 58, 62, 63, 70, 73, 75, 80, 82, 99ff, 125, 133, 137, 139, 140, 146, 151, 152, 155, 160.
And see PEVE and PICKUP
Raybould, S. G., iii, 120, 121;
and need for university standards and working-class students, 12;
and role of UAE staff, 114ff
Recurrent Education, 33, 34, 35, 36;
related to lifelong education and continuing education, 37;
submerged in professional continuing education, 50ff;
continuing importance of idea, 143.
See also Continuing Education, Paid Educational Leave
Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction (the 1919 Report), 7, 17, 88;
and university reform, 8;
and implementation 10;
and Russell Report, 14;
and Lifelong Education, 35
Rice-Davies, Mandy, 105
Robbins, D., 129
Robbins Report, 29, 38, 40, 53, 59, 128, 144, 160
Rockhill, K., 94
Ruskin College, 6, 98
Russell Report, 13–15, 19, 28, 30–31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 42, 49, 59, 122, 141, 154
Russell, Willy, 24
Sainsburys, 90
Schools, 52
'Second Chance Courses', 97
Sedgwick, Fred, iii
Sheffield City Council, 158
Simon, Brian, 24
Social Democratic Party, v, 164;
More Means Better, 164
Social Science Research Council (SSRC), 130
Star Wars Programme, 130
Stephens, Michael, 43, 58
Stuart, James, 3
Technological change, 101ff;
as a contentious issue, 102ff;
in 1980s, 137
Taylor, R., 96
Tawney, R. H., iii, iv, 6, 9, 14, 59, 78, 89;
The Agrarian Revolution in the Sixteenth Century, 120;
on creation of EMDs allowing university neglect, 123
Tenure, vi
Thatcher, Mrs, 20, 49
Thatcherism, 20, 21, 50ff;
and schools, 51–2;
and universities, 52ff;
and UAE, 79;
UCACE, UGC and, 81.
And see Mrs Thatcher, Conservative Governments
Thompson, E. P., 120;
The Making of the English Working Class, 120
Thompson, George, iii, 6
Times Higher Education Supplement, 109
Trades Union Congress, 49
Trade Unions, 5, 6, 7, 40, 136, 137
'The Great Tradition', 13, 15, 17, 59, 62, 87, 136
Training, 21–2;
contrasted with liberal education, 103ff;
the MSC and, 105ff;
distinction between training and education, 105ff;
and employer, 107ff;
and University education, 139ff
Tutorial classes, iv, 5, 7, 10, 49, 88;
decline of, 131
The Tutors' Bulletin, 89
UNESCO, 34, 36
Unemployment, 51, 137;
work with unemployed students, 89;
unemployed groups, 149;
need for development work with, 153
USA, universities compared with UK, 38;
continuing education in, 62, 67, 94–5, 124;
as an example for UK, 84–85;
higher education as a profit-maker in, 100, 112;
serving an elite, 124;
participation rates, 129
Universities Council For Adult Education/Adult and Continuing Education (UCAE/UCACE), 19, 25, 26, 27;
Evidence to Russell, 28ff, 87;
Working Party with CVCP, 32, 33;
conservatism, 41;
and expansion of adult education, 42, 43;
on extramural restructuring, 46;
move to minimal initiatory role, 47–8;
Working Party on Industrial Studies, 49;
conference with CVCP 1980, 60ff;

and new austerity, 61ff;
and new appellation, 63;
and government strategy, 65;
and campaigning, 72;
and part-time degrees, 77;
report on new formula, 77;
successes and failures, 80ff;
on economics and education, 109–110;
Working Party on role of tutor, 116, 124
Universities Funding Council, vi, vii;
powers and functions, 160
University Adult Education in the Later Twentieth Century (UCAE), 28ff, 34, 87
University Extension Movement, 3–4
University Grants Committee, vii, 16, 20, 30, 31, 40, 43–45, 48, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 74, 84, 101, 102, 103, 111, 112, 144, 151, 163;
and economic ideology, 50;
and 1980s cuts, 54ff;
selectivity exercise, 55;
collaboration with conservative government, 57, 81;
failure to expand continuing education, 60;
Working Party on continuing education, 65ff;
and support for PEVE, 151;
replacement of by UFC, 160
University Growth, 53–4;
and 1980s cuts, 54ff;
position today, 128ff
University Standards in adult education, 11–12, 92, 147, 148
University of Aston, 73
University of Bath, 108
University of Bristol, 42;
and post experience courses, 48;
and new funding formula, 83
University of California, 124
University of Durham, 46;
and role of tutors, 115
University College Cardiff, 54;
tutorial classes, 131
University of Essex, 73
University of Glasgow, 109
University of Hull, 26, 28;
and part-time degrees, 46, 75;
and PEVE, 83
University of Kent, 46, 75
University of Lancaster, 144
University of Leeds, 3, 10, 26, 46;
review of adult and continuing education, 63;
part-time degrees, 75;
and role of UAE tutor, 115;
and tutorial classes, 131
University of Leicester, 46
University of Liverpool, 3, 73, 75
University of London, 3;
and Wise Report on Adult Education, 46;
and cuts, 48, 162;
and threatened closure of EMD, 127;
and long courses, 131
University of Loughborough, 46
University of Manchester, 3, 26, 50, 71, 73, 75, 83
University of Nottingham, 4, 10, 83, 158
University of Oxford, 3, 26;
and modern adult education, 5;
and liberalism, 9;
and 1970 Report, 42, 43;
and contemporary workers' education, 72;
and new funding formula, 83
University of Reading, 10
University of Salford, 56
University of Sheffield, 10, 26, 42;
changes in continuing education structure, 46;
macro-EMD, 83;
tutorial classes, 131
University of Southampton, 46
University of Sussex, 26, 28
University of Warwick, 73, 100;
Industrial Relations Research Unit, 130
University of York, 73, 109
Voluntaryism, 154
Walde, George, 77
Williams, Raymond, 120, 148
Wilson, Harold, 39, 45
Wiltshire, Harold, 13, 58, 83
Wise Report, University of London, 1977, 46
Women, and higher education, 4;
courses with women students, 89;
in class structure, 90;
continuing bias against, 130;
need for university provision with, 149
Wooton, Barbara, 6
Workers' Education Association (WEA), iv, 7, 98, 115, 159;
formation of, 5, 6;
links with universities, 10, 12, 19, 20, 31, 33, 48, 71;
and Russell Report, 49;
relations with universities, 72, 73;
decline of joint provision, 135;
position today, 150ff;
future role of, 154–5.
See also Extramural Department; Russell Report
Workers Education Trade Union Committee, 6–7
Working class, changes in, 11–12, 18, 90–91, 136–37

Working-class students, 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 23;
UAE to control or liberate, 7, 9;
decline of in UAE, 11–12, 13;
day release courses for, 25–7;
exclusion from UK universities in post-war period, 38;
irrelevance of university to, 90ff;
relevance of certain reform strategies for UAE to, 91ff;
disillusion with education, 93ff;
and the established knowledge, 95ff;
and extramural classes, 135;
need for positive discrimination towards, 146ff.
See also Women; Black Workers; Unemployment; Extramural Departments; Workers' Educational Association.
Yarnit, M., 97

University Adult Education in Crisis is a history, a polemic and a prescription. It traces in detail the process by which the state's formal commitment to increasing access to higher education and expanding continuing education has gone hand in hand with severe cuts in extramural departments, an insistence on self-financing and an emphasis on vocational training for economic regeneration, at the expense of liberal education for personal development and citizenship. This has led universities to play down the importance of traditional extramural work and the role of adult education departments, resourcing vocational expansion through new agencies — pledged to entrepreneurialism and profit and seeking to replace the adult educational intellectual with new academic managers committed to training.

University Adult Education in Crisis asserts that the response of the universities has been inadequate. Increased student fees and the turn to vocationalism threaten to cut off wide sections of the community from rigorous, critical education and reinforce the universities' historic neglect of the educationally underprivileged. It trenchantly argues that attempts to subordinate universities in general, and the education of adults in particular, to the state, employers and the market are anti-educational — wrong in principle and problematic in practice. If successful, they can subvert the free-thinking critical approach of university education — but success is far from guaranteed. The message of this book is that the creation of a broad, popular, continuing education is contingent upon adult educators resisting present attempts to make post-18 provision self-financing vocationalism and transform educators into fund-raisers.

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